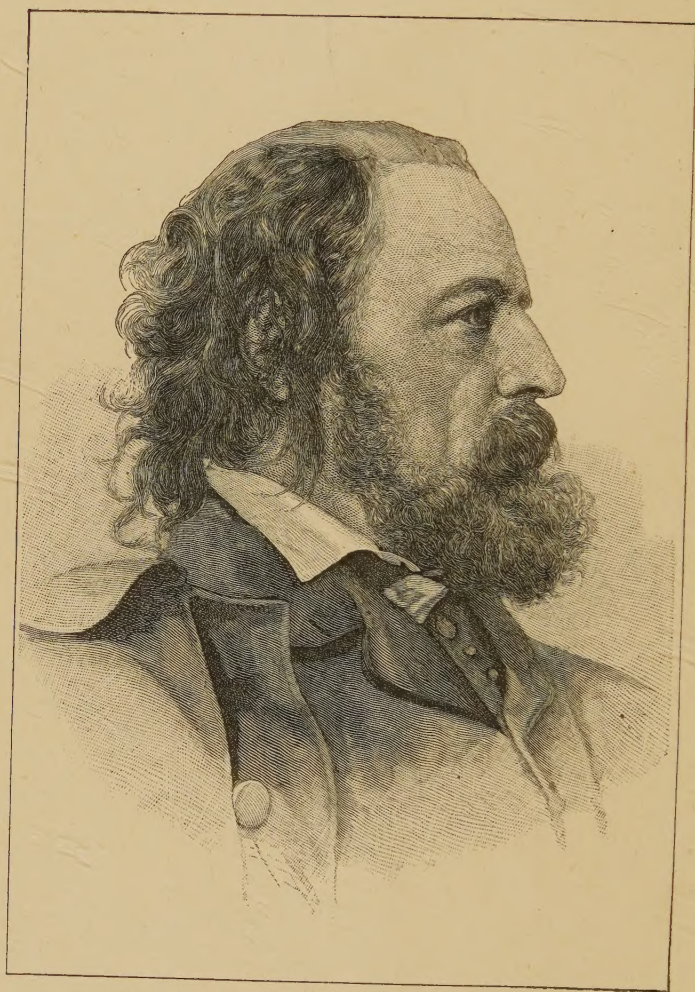


TENNYSON

ILLUSTRATED





THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

(*POET LAUREATE*).

Complete Edition

FROM THE AUTHOR'S TEXT.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY ENGLISH AND
AMERICAN ARTISTS.



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TO THE QUEEN.

*Revered, beloved — O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth
Than arms, or power of brains, or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,*

*Victoria, — since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base;*

*And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there;*

*Then — while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes —*

*Take, Madam, this poor book of song;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,*

*And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day!
May children of our children say,
"She wrought her people lasting good;*

*" Her court was pure; her life serene;
God gave her peace; her land reposed;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen;*

*" And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet*

*" By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea."*



JUVENILIA.



CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall:
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

II.

At eve the beetle boometh
Athwart the thicket lone:
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone;
At midnight the moon cometh
And looketh down alone.
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,
The callow throstle lispeth,
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,
The babbling rannel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth.

NOTHING WILL DIE.

WHEN will the stream be awarey of
flowing
Under my eye?
When will the wind be awarey of
blowing
Over the sky?
When will the clouds be awarey of
fleeting?
When will the heart be awarey of
beating?
And nature die?
Never, oh! never, nothing will die;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die;
All things will change

Thro' eternity.
'Tis the world's winter;
Autumn and summer
Are gone long ago;
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring, a new comer,
A spring rich and strange,
Shall make the winds blow
Round and round,
Thro' and thro',
Here and there,
Till the air
And the ground
Shall be fill'd with life anew.

The world was never made;
It will change, but it will not fade.
So let the wind range;
For even and morn
Ever will be
Thro' eternity.
Nothing was born;
Nothing will die;
All things will change.

ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its
flowing
Under my eye;
Warmly and broadly the south winds
are blowing
Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are
fleeting;
Every heart this May morning in joy-
ance is beating
Full merrily;
Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow;
The wind will cease to blow;
The clouds will cease to fleet;
The heart will cease to beat;
For all things must die.
All things must die.
Spring will come never more.
Oh! vanity!
Death waits at the door.
See! our friends are all forsaking
The wine and the merrymaking.
We are call'd — we must go.

Laid low, very low,
 In the dark we must lie.
 The merry glees are still;
 The voice of the bird
 Shall no more be heard,
 Nor the wind on the hill.
 Oh! misery!
 Hark! death is calling
 While I speak to ye,
 The jaw is falling,
 The red cheek paling,
 The strong limbs failing;
 Ice with the warm blood mixing;
 The eyeballs fixing.
 Nine times goes the passing bell:
 Ye merry souls, farewell.
 The old earth
 Had a birth,
 As all men know,
 Long ago.
 And the old earth must die.
 So let the warm winds range,
 And the blue wave beat the shore;
 For even and morn
 Ye will never see
 Thro' eternity.
 All things were born.
 Ye will come never more,
 For all things must die.

LEONINE ELEGIACS.

Low-flowing breezes are roaming
 the broad valley dimm'd in the
 gloaming:
 Thoro' the black-stemm'd pines only
 the far river shines.
 Creeping thro' blossomy rushes and
 bowers of rose-blowing bushes,
 Down by the poplar tall rivulets bab-
 ble and fall.
 Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly; the
 grasshopper carolleth clearly;
 Deeply the wood-dove coos; shrilly
 the owl halloos;
 Winds creep; dews fall chilly: in her
 first sleep earth breathes stilly:
 Over the pools in the burn water-gnats
 murmur and mourn.
 Sadly the far kine loweth: the glim-
 mering water out-floweth:
 Twin peaks shadow'd with pine slope
 to the dark hyaline.
 Low-throned Hesper is stayed between
 the two peaks; but the Naiad
 Throbbing in mild unrest holds him
 beneath in her breast.
 The ancient poetess singeth, that Hes-
 perus all things bringeth,
 Smoothing the wearied mind: bring
 me my love, Rosalind.
 Thou comest morning or even; she
 cometh not morning or even.
 False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is
 my sweet Rosalind?

SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND.

O God! my God! have mercy now.
 I faint, I fall. Men say that Thou
 Didst die for me, for such as me,
 Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,
 And that my sin was as a thorn
 Among the thorns that girt Thy brow,
 Wounding Thy soul.—That even now,
 In this extremest misery
 Of ignorance, I should require
 A sign! and if a bolt of fire
 Would rive the slumbrous summer
 noon
 While I do pray to Thee alone,
 Think my belief would stronger grow:
 Is not my human pride brought low?
 The boastings of my spirit still?
 The joy I had in my freewill
 All cold, and dead, and corpse-like
 grown?
 And what is left to me, but Thou
 And faith in Thee? Men pass me by;
 Christians with happy countenances—
 And children all seem full of Thee!
 And women smile with saint-like
 glances
 Like Thine own mother's when she
 bow'd
 Above Thee, on that happy morn
 When angels spake to men aloud,
 And Thou and peace to earth were
 born,
 Goodwill to me as well as all—
 I one of them: my brothers they;
 Brothers in Christ—a world of peace
 And confidence, day after day;
 And trust and hope till things should
 cease,
 And then one Heaven receive us all.

 How sweet to have a common faith!
 To hold a common scorn of death!
 And at a burial to hear
 The creaking cords which wound and
 eat
 Into my human heart, whene'er
 Earth goes to earth, with grief, not
 fear,
 With hopeful grief, were passing
 sweet!

 Thrice happy state again to be
 The trustful infant on the knee!
 Who lets his rosy fingers play
 About his mother's neck, and knows
 Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.
 They comfort him by night and day;
 They light his little life alway;
 He hath no thought of coming woes;
 He hath no care of life or death;
 Scarce outward signs of joy arise,
 Because the Spirit of happiness
 And perfect rest so inward is;

And loveth so his innocent heart,
Her temple and her place of birth,
Where she would ever wish to dwell,
Life of the fountain there, beneath
Its salient springs, and far apart,
Hating to wander out on earth,
Or breathe into the hollow air,
Whose chillness would make visible
Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,
Which mixing with the infant's blood,
Fulfils him with beatitude.
Oh! sure it is a special care
Of God, to fortify from doubt,
To arm in proof, and guard about
With triple-mailed trust, and clear
Delight, the infant's dawning year.

Would that my gloomed fancy were
As thine, my mother, when with brows
Propt on thy knees, my hands upheld
In thine, I listen'd to thy vows,
For me outpour'd in holiest prayer —
For me unworthy! — and beheld
Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
The beauty and repose of faith,
And the clear spirit shining thro'.

Oh! wherefore do we grow awry
From roots which strike so deep? why
dare
Paths in the desert? Could not I
Bow myself down, where thou hast
knelt,
To the earth — until the ice would
melt

Here, and I feel as thou hast felt?
What Devil had the heart to scathe
Flowers thou hadst rear'd — to brush
the dew

From thine own lily, when thy grave
Was deep, my mother, in the clay?
Myself? Is it thus? Myself? Had I
So little love for thee? But why
Prevail'd not thy pure prayers? Why
pray

To one who heeds not, who can save
But will not? Great in faith, and
strong

Against the grief of circumstance
Wert thou, and yet unheard. What if
Thou pleadest still, and seest me drive
Thro' utter dark a full-sail'd skiff,
Unpiloted i' the echoing dance
Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low
Unto the death, not sunk! I know
At matins and at evensong,
That thou, if thou wert yet alive,
In deep and daily prayers would'st
strive

To reconcile me with thy God.
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold
At heart, thou wouldest murmur
still —

"Bring this lamb back into Thy fold,
My Lord, if so it be Thy will."
Would'st tell me I must brook the rod
And chastisement of human pride;

That pride, the sin of devils, stood
Betwixt me and the light of God!
That hitherto I had defied
And had rejected God — that grace
Would drop from his o'er-brimming
love,

As manna on my wilderness,
If I would pray — that God would
move
And strike the hard, hard rock, and
thence,

Sweet in their utmost bitterness,
Would issue tears of penitence
Which would keep green hope's life.
Alas!

I think that pride hath now no place
Nor sojourn in me. I am void,
Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then? Why not yet
Anchor thy frailty there, where man
Hath moor'd and rested? Ask the sea
At midnight, when the crisp slope
waves

After a tempest, rib and fret
The broad-imbas'd beach, why he
Slumbers not like a mountain tarn?
Wherefore his ridges are not curls
And ripples of an inland mere?
Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can
Draw down into his vexed pools
All that blue heaven which hues and
paves

The other? I am too forlorn,
Too shaken: my own weakness fools
My judgment, and my spirit whirls,
Moved from beneath with doubt and
fear.

"Yet," said I in my morn of youth,
The unsunn'd freshness of my strength,
When I went forth in quest of truth,
"It is man's privilege to doubt,
If so be that from doubt at length,
Truth may stand forth unmoved of
change,

An image with profulgent brows,
And perfect limbs, as from the storm
Of running fires and fluid range
Of lawless airs, at last stood out
This excellence and solid form
Of constant beauty. For the Ox
Feeds in the herb, and sleeps, or fills
The horned valleys all about,
And hollows of the fringed hills
In summer heats, with placid lows
Unfearing, till his own blood flows
About his hoof. And in the flocks
The lamb rejoiceth in the year,
And raceth freely with his fere,
And answers to his mother's calls
From the flower'd furrow. In a time,
Of which he wots not, run short pains
Thro' his warm heart; and then, from
whence

He knows not, on his light there falls

A shadow; and his native slope,
Where he was wont to leap and climb,
Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,
And something in the darkness draws
His forehead earthward, and he dies.
Shall man live thus, in joy and hope
As a young lamb, who cannot dream,
Living, but that he shall live on?
Shall we not look into the laws
Of life and death, and things that
seem,

And things that be, and analyze
Our double nature, and compare
All creeds till we have found the one,
If one there be?" Ay me! I fear
All may not doubt, but everywhere
Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,
Whom call I Idol? Let Thy dove
Shadow me over, and my sins
Be unremember'd, and Thy love
Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet
Somewhat before the heavy clod
Weighs on me, and the busy fret
Of that sharp-headed worm begins
In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life! O weary death!
O spirit and heart made desolate!
O damned vacillating state!

THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thunders of the upper
deep;

Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded
sleep

The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sun-
lights flee

About his shadowy sides. above him
swell

Huge sponges of millennial growth
and height;

And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and
secret cell

Unnumber'd and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumber-
ing green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his
sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the
deep;

Then once by man and angels to be
seen,

In roaring he shall rise and on the
surface die.

SONG.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,
Leaning upon the ridged sea,
Breathed low around the rolling earth
With mellow preludes, "We are
free."

The streams through many a lilled row
Down-carolling to the crisped sea,
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
Atween the blossoms, "We are
free."

LILIAN.

I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Clasps her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

II.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking thro' and thro' me
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks:
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gathered wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughters dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

III.

Prithee weep, May Lilian!
Gayety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian:
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter trilleth:
Prithee weep, May Lilian.

IV.

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Airy Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright,
but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of
chastity,
Clear, without heat, undying, tended
by
Pure vestal thoughts in the trans-
lucent fane
Of her still spirit; locks not wide-dis-
pread,
Madonna-wise on either side her
head;
Sweet lips whereon perpetually
did reign
The summer calm of golden charity,

Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
 Revered Isabel, the crown and
 head,
 The stately flower of female fortitude,
 Of perfect wifehood and pure
 lowlihead.

II.

The intuitive decision of a bright
 And thorough-edged intellect to part
 Error from crime; a prudence to
 withhold;
 The laws of marriage character'd
 in gold
 Upon the blanched tablets of her
 heart;
 A love still burning upward, giving
 light
 To read those laws; an accent very
 low
 In blandishment, but a most silver flow
 Of subtle-paced counsel in dis-
 tress,
 Right to the heart and brain, tho'
 undescried,
 Winning 'its way with extreme
 gentleness
 Thro' all the outworks of suspicious
 pride;
 A courage to endure and to obey;
 A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,
 Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
 The queen of marriage, a most perfect
 wife.

III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon;
 A clear stream flowing with a muddy
 one,
 Till in its onward current it absorbs
 With swifter movement and in
 purer light
 The vexed eddies of its wayward
 brother:
 A leaning and upbearing parasite,
 Clothing the stem, which else had
 fallen quite
 With cluster'd flower-bells and am-
 brosial orbs
 Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on
 each other —
 Shadow forth thee: — the world
 hath not another
 (Tho' all her fairest forms are types
 of thee,
 And thou of God in thy great charity)
 Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

"Mariana in the moated grange."
Measure for Measure.

With blackest moss the flower-plots
 Were thickly crusted, one and all:
 The rusted nails fell from the knots

That held the pear to the gable-
 wall.
 The broken sheds look'd sad and
 strange:
 Unlifted was the clinking latch;
 Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
 Upon the lonely moated grange.
 She only said, "My life is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
 Her tears fell ere the dews were
 dried;
 She could not look on the sweet heaven,
 Either at morn or eventide.
 After the flitting of the bats,
 When thickest dark did trance the
 sky,
 She drew her casement-curtain by,
 And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
 She only said, "The night is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
 Waking she heard the night-fowl
 crow:
 The cock sung out an hour ere light:
 From the dark fen the oxen's low
 Came to her: without hope of change,
 In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
 Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed
 morn
 About the lonely moated grange.
 She only said, "The day is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
 A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
 And o'er it many, round and small,
 The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.
 Hard by a poplar shook alway,
 All silver-green with gnarled bark:
 For leagues no other tree did mark
 The level waste, the rounding gray.
 She only said, "My life is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the shrill winds were up and
 away,
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.
 But when the moon was very low,
 And wild winds bound within their
 cell,
 The shadow of the poplar fell
 Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd;
The blue fly sung in the pane; the
mouse

Behind the mouldering wainscot
shriek'd,

Or from the crevice peer'd about.
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.

She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

The sparrows chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the
hour

When the thick-moated sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then, said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;

She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
Oh, God, that I were dead!"

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

With one black shadow at its feet,
The house thro' all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But "Ave Mary," made she moan,
And "Ave Mary," night and
morn,

And "Ah," she sang, "to be all
alone,

To live forgotten, and love for-
lorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest
brown

To left and right, and made appear
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine,
The home of woe without a tear.

And "Ave Mary," was her moan,
"Madonna, sad is night and
morn,"

And "Ah," she sang, "to be all
alone,
To live forgotten, and love for-
lorn."

Till all the crimson changed, and past
Into deep orange o'er the sea,
Low on her knees herself she cast,
Before Our Lady murmur'd she;
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace
To help me of my weary load."
And on the liquid mirror glow'd
The clear perfection of her face.

"Is this the form," she made her
moan,

"That won his praises night
and morn?"

And "Ah," she said, "but I wake
alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake for-
lorn."

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would
bleat,

Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
But day increased from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming salt;
Till now at noon she slept again,

And seem'd knee-deep in mountain
grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,
And runlets babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower
moan,

And murmuring, as at night and
morn,

She thought, "My spirit is here
alone,

Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:
She felt he was and was not there.
She woke: the babble of the stream
Fell, and, without, the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sear and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white;

And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward than at night or
morn,

"Sweet Mother, let me not here
alone

Live forgotten, and die forlorn."

And, rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
For "Love," they said, "must needs
be true,

To what is loveliest upon earth."

An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look at her with slight, and say
"But now thy beauty flows away,
So be alone forevermore."

"O cruel heart," she changed her
tone,

"And cruel love, whose end is
scorn,
Is this the end to be left alone,
To live forgotten, and die for-
lorn?"

But sometimes in the falling day
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look into her eyes and say,
"But thou shalt be alone no more."
And flaming downward over all
From heat to heat the day decreased,
And slowly rounded to the east
The one black shadow from the wall.
"The day to night," she made her
moan,
"The day to night, the night to
morn,
And day and night I am left alone
To live forgotten, and love for-
lorn."

At eve a dry cicala sung,
There came a sound as of the sea;
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,
And lean'd upon the balcony.
There all in spaces rosy-bright
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,
And deepening thro' the silent
spheres
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
And weeping then she made her moan,
"The night comes on that knows
not morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

TO —.

I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful
scorn,
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts
atwain
The knots that tangle human
creeds,
The wounding cords that bind and
strain
The heart until it bleeds,
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
Roof not a glance so keen as thine:
If aught of prophecy be mine,
Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit;
Falsehood shall bare her plaited
brow:
Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not
now
With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant
swords
Can do away that ancient lie;

A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning
words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost
need,
Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
Until she be an athlete bold,
And weary with a finger's touch
Those writhed limbs of lightning
speed;
Like that strange angel which of old,
Until the breaking of the light,
Wrestled with wandering Israel,
Past Yabbok brook the livelong
night,
And heaven's mazed signs stood still
In the dim tract of Penuel.

MADELINE.

I.

Thou art not steep'd in golden lan-
guors,
No tranced summer calm is thine,
Ever varying Madeline.
Thro' light and shadow thou dost
range,
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
And airy forms of flitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore.
Revealings deep and clear are thine
Of wealthy smiles: but who may know
Whether smile or frown be fleetest?
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
Who may know?
Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
Light-glooming over eyes divine,
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are
thine,
Ever varying Madeline.
Thy smile and frown are not aloof
From one another,
Each to each is dearest brother;
Hues of the silken sheeny woof
Momentarily shot into each other.
All the mystery is thine;
Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore,
Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,
By veering passion fann'd,
About thee breaks and dances:
When I would kiss thy hand,
The flush of anger'd shame
O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down

A sudden-curved frown :
 But when I turn away,
 Thou, willing me to stay,
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest,
 But, looking fixedly the while,
 All my bounding heart entanglest
 In a golden-netted smile ;
 Then in madness and in bliss,
 If my lips should dare to kiss
 Thy taper fingers amorously,
 Again thou blushest angerly ;
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown.

SONG : THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
 And dew is cold upon the ground,
 And the far-off stream is dumb,
 And the whirring sail goes round,
 And the whirring sail goes round ;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
 And rarely smells the new-mown
 hay,
 And the cock hath sung beneath the
 thatch
 Twice or thrice his roundelay,
 Twice or thrice his roundelay ;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

Thy tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,
 Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,
 Which upon the dark afloat,
 So took echo with delight,
 So took echo with delight,
 That her voice untuneful grown,
 Wears all day a fainter tone.

II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;
 But I cannot mimic it ;
 Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-
 o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn
 blew free
 In the silken sail of infancy,
 The tide of time flow'd back with me,

The forward-flowing tide of time ;
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,
 By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
 High-walled gardens green and old ;
 True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
 The low and bloomed foliage, drove
 The fragrant, glistening deeps, and
 clove

The citron-shadows in the blue :
 By garden porches on the brim,
 The costly doors flung open wide,
 Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
 And broider'd sofas on each side :

In sooth it was a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans
 guard

The outlet, did I turn away
 The boat-head down a broad canal
 From the main river sluiced, where all
 The sloping of the moon-lit sward
 Was damask-work, and deep inlay
 Of braided blooms unmown, which
 crept

Adown to where the water slept.
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
 Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
 My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
 Until another night in night
 I enter'd, from the clearer light,
 Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
 Imprisoning sweets, which, as they
 clomb

Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the
 dome
 Of hollow boughs. — A goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
 Is rounded to as clear a lake.
 From the green rivage many a fall
 Of diamond rillets musical,
 Thro' little crystal arches low
 Down from the central fountain's flow
 Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
 The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn
 A walk with vary-color'd shells
 Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
 All round about the fragrant marge



*"Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs and obelisks."*

From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung;
Not he: but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unexpress'd,

Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd: the solemn palms were
ranged

Above, unwoo'd of summer wind:
A sudden splendor from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-
green,

And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
 Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
 Grew darker from that under-flame:
 So, leaping lightly from the boat,
 With silver anchor left afloat,
 In marvel whence that glory came
 Upon me, as in sleep I sank
 In cool soft turf upon the bank,
 Entranced with that place and time,
 So worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
 And many a shadow-checker'd lawn
 Full of the city's stilly sound,
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing
 round

The stately cedar, tamarisks,
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
 Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honor of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed visions unawares
 From the long alley's latticed shade
 Emerged, I came upon the great
 Pavilion of the Caliphat.
 Right to the carven cedarn doors,
 Flung inward over spangled floors,
 Broad-based flights of marble stairs
 Ran up with golden balustrade,
 After the fashion of the time,
 And humor of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
 As with the quintessence of flame,
 A million tapers flaring bright
 From twisted silvers look'd to shame
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
 Upon the mooned domes aloof
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof
 Of night new-risen, that marvellous
 time

To celebrate the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
 Serene with argent-lidded eyes
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
 Tressed with redolent ebony,
 In many a dark delicious curl,
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone;
 The sweetest lady of the time,
 Well worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich
 Throne of the massive ore, from which
 Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
 Engarlanded and diaper'd

With inwrought flowers, a cloth of
 gold.

Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
 With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
 I saw him — in his golden prime,
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO ———.

I.

THOU who stealest fire,
 From the fountains of the past,
 To glorify the present; oh, haste,
 Visit my low desire!
 Strengthen me, enlighten me!
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,
 Flinging the gloom of yesternight
 On the white day; but robed in soft-
 en'd light
 Of orient state.
 Whilom thou camest with the morn-
 ing mist,
 Even as a maid, whose stately brow
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn
 have kiss'd.
 When, she, as thou,
 Stays on her floating locks the lovely
 freight
 Of overflowing blooms, and earliest
 shoots
 Of orient green, giving safe pledge of
 fruits,
 Which in wintertide shall star
 The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilom thou camest with the morn-
 ing mist,
 And with the evening cloud,
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
 open breast
 (Those peerless flowers which in the
 rudest wind
 Never grow sear,
 When rooted in the garden of the
 mind,
 Because they are the earliest of the
 year).
 Nor was the night thy shroud.
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken
 rest
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant
 Hope.
 The eddying of her garments caught
 from thee
 The light of thy great presence; and
 the cope.
 Of the half-attain'd futurity,
 Tho' deep not fathomless,

Was cloven with the million stars
 which tremble
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless in-
 fancy.
 Small thought was there of life's dis-
 tress;
 For sure she deem'd no mist of earth
 could dull
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
 beautiful:
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's
 spheres,

Listening the lordly music flowing
 from
 The illimitable years.
 O strengthen me, enlighten me!
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
 eyes!



*"And chiefly from the brook that loves
 To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand."*

Thou comest not with showers of
 flaunting vines
 Unto mine inner eye,
 Divinest Memory!

Thou wert not nursed by the water-
 fall

Which ever sounds and shines
 A pillar of white light upon the wall
 Of purple cliffs, aloof descried:
 Come from the woods that belt the
 gray hill-side,

The seven elms, the poplars four
 That stand beside my father's door,
 And chiefly from the brook that loves
 To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed
 sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
 In every elbow and turn,
 The filter'd tribute of the rough wood-
 land,

O! hither lead thy feet!
 Pour round mine ears the livelong
 bleat
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wat-
 tled folds,
 Upon the ridged wolds,
 When the first matin-song hath
 waken'd loud
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
 What time the amber morn
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung
 cloud.

V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye
 To the young spirit present
 When first she is wed;
 And like a bride of old
 In triumph led,
 With music and sweet showers
 Of festal flowers,

Unto the dwelling she must sway.
 Well hast thou done, great artist
 Memory,
 In setting round thy first experiment
 With royal frame-work of wrought
 gold ;
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first
 essay,
 And foremost in thy various gallery
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight
 falls
 Upon the storied walls ;
 For the discovery
 And newness of thine art so pleased
 thee,
 That all which thou hast drawn of
 fairest

Or boldest since, but lightly weighs
 With thee unto the love thou bearest
 The first-born of thy genius. Artist-
 like,
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze
 On the prime labor of thine early days :
 No matter what the sketch might be ;
 Whether the high field on the bush-
 less Pike,
 Or even a sand-built ridge
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
 Stretch'd wide and wild the waste
 enormous marsh,
 Where from the frequent bridge,
 Like emblems of infinity,



*"The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
 As a sick man's room when he taketh repose."*

The trenched waters run from sky to
 sky ;
 Or a garden bower'd close
 With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
 Long alleys falling down to twilight
 grots,
 Or opening upon level plots
 Of crowned lilies, standing near
 Purple-spiked lavender :
 Whither in after life retired
 From brawling storms,
 From weary wind,
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,
 We may hold converse with all
 forms
 Of the many-sided mind,
 And those whom passion hath not
 blinded,
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,
 Were how much better than to own
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

SONG.

I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
 Dwelling amid these yellowing
 bowers :
 To himself he talks ;
 For at eventide, listening earnestly,
 At his work you may hear him sob and
 sigh
 In the walks ;

Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
 Of the mouldering flowers :
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
 As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
 An hour before death;
 My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves
 At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves,
 And the breath
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,
 And the year's last rose.
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky
 At night he said, "The wanderings
 Of this most intricate Universe
 Teach me the nothingness of things."
 Yet could not all creation pierce
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty; that the dull
 Saw no divinity in grass,
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,
 And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue: not the gods
 More purely, when they wish to charm
 Pallas and Juno sitting by:
 And with a sweeping of the arm,
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour
 He canvass'd human mysteries,
 And trod on silk, as if the winds
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,
 And stood aloof from other minds
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
 Himself unto himself he sold:
 Upon himself himself did feed:
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
 And other than his form of creed,
 With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above;
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro'
 good and ill,
 He saw thro' his own soul,
 The marvel of the everlasting will
 An open scroll,

Before him lay: with echoing feet he threaded
 The secretest walks of fame:
 The viewless arrows of his thoughts
 were headed
 And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,
 And of so fierce a flight,
 From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
 Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
 Them earthward till they lit;
 Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
 flower,
 The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing
 forth anew
 Where'er they fell, behold,
 Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
 A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
 Thy winged shafts of truth,
 To throng with stately blooms the
 breathing spring
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs
 with beams,
 Tho' one did fling the fire.
 Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
 dreams
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth,
 the world
 Like one great garden show'd,
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
 upcurl'd,
 Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august
 sunrise
 Her beautiful bold brow,
 When rites and forms before his burn-
 ing eyes
 Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden
robes

Sunn'd by those orient skies;
But round about the circles of the
globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced
in flame

WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred
name.

And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they
ran,

And as the lightning to the thun-
der

Which follows it, riving the spirit of
man,

Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words.
No word

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with
his word
She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

Vex not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit:
Vex not thou the poet's mind;
For thou canst not fathom it.
Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear;
All the place is holy ground;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer'
Come not here.

Holy water will I pour
Into every spicy flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it
around.

The flowers would faint at your cruel
cheer.

In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants.

Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry
bird chants.

It would fall to the ground if you came
in.

In the middle leaps a fountain
Like sheet lightning,
Ever brightening

With a low melodious thunder;
All day and all night it is ever drawn

From the brain of the purple moun-
tain

Which stands in the distance yon-
der:

It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from
Heaven above,

And it sings a song of undying love;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and
full,

You never would hear it; your ears
are so dull;

So keep where you are: you are foul
with sin;

It would shrink to the earth if you
came in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and
saw,

Betwixt the green brink and the run-
ning foam,

Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
prest

To little harps of gold; and while they
mused

Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the mid-
dle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither
away? fly no more.

Whither away from the high green
field, and the happy blossoming
shore?

Day and night to the billow the foun-
tain calls:

Down shower the gambolling water-
falls

From wandering over the lea:
Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson
shells,

And thick with white bells the clover-
hill swells

High over the full-toned sea:

O hither, come hither and furl your
sails,

Come hither to me and to me:

Hither, come hither and frolic and
play;

Here it is only the mew that wails;

We will sing to you all the day:

Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,

For here are the blissful downs and
dales,

And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
And the spangle dances in bight and

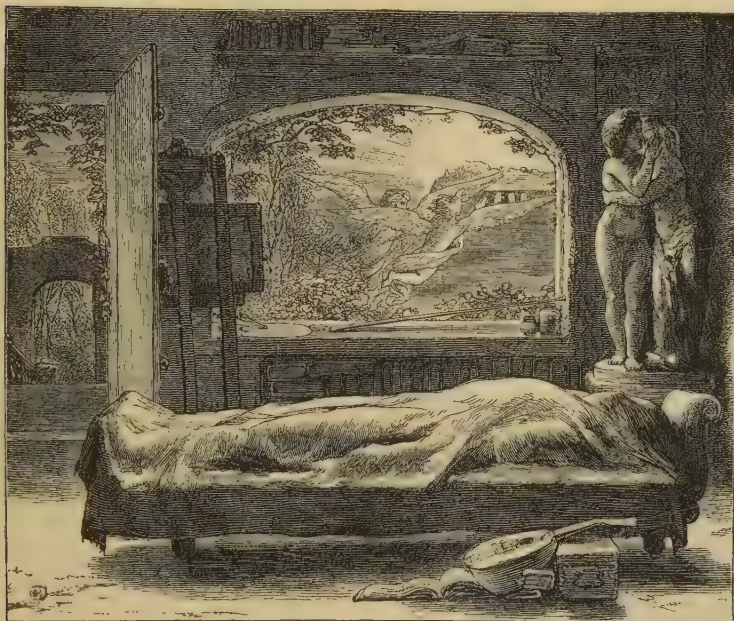
bay,
And the rainbow forms and flies on
the land

Over the islands free;

And the rainbow lives in the curve of
the sand;

Hither, come hither and see ;
 And the rainbow hangs on the poising
 wave,
 And sweet is the color of cove and
 cave,
 And sweet shall your welcome be :
 O hither, come hither, and be our
 lords,
 For merry brides are we :
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak
 sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 With pleasure and love and jubilee :
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 When the sharp clear twang of the
 golden chords
 Runs up the ridged sea.
 Who can light on as happy a shore
 All the world o'er, all the world
 o'er ?
 Whither away ? listen and stay :
 mariner, mariner, fly no more.



*"Life and Thought have gone away
 Side by side."*

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away
 Side by side,
 Leaving door and windows wide :
 Careless tenants they !

II.

All within is dark as night :
 In the windows is no light ;
 And no murmur at the door,
 So frequent on its hinge before.

III.

Close the door, the shutters close,
 Or thro' the windows we shall see
 The nakedness and vacancy
 Of the dark deserted house.

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth
 Is here or merry-making sound.
 The house was builded of the earth,
 And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought
 Here no longer dwell ;
 But in a city glorious —
 A great and distant city — have bought
 A mansion incorruptible.
 Would they could have staid with us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
 Wide, wild, and open to the air,

Which had built up everywhere
 An under-roof of doleful gray.
 With an inner voice the river ran,
 Adown it floated a dying swan,
 And loudly did lament.
 It was the middle of the day.
 Ever the weary wind went on,
 And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
 And white against the cold-white sky,
 Shone out their crowning snows.
 One willow over the river wept,

And shook the wave as the wind did
 sigh;
 Above in the wind was the swallow,
 Chasing itself at its own wild will,
 And far thro' the marish green
 and still
 The tangled water-courses slept,
 Shot over with purple, and green, and
 yellow.

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the
 soul
 Of that waste place with joy
 Hidden in sorrow: at first to the ear



*"And far thro' the marish green and still
 The tangled water-courses slept."*

The warble was low, and full and
 clear;
 And floating about the under-sky,
 Prevailing in weakness, the coronach
 stole
 Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear;
 But anon her awful jubilant voice,
 With a music strange and manifold,
 Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold;
 As when a mighty people rejoice
 With shawms, and with cymbals, and
 harps of gold,
 And the tumult of their acclain is
 roll'd
 Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
 To the shepherd who watcheth the
 evening star.
 And the creeping mosses and clamber-
 ing weeds,

And the willow-branches hoar and
 dank,
 And the wavy swell of the sougning
 reeds,
 And the wave-worn horns of the echo-
 ing bank,
 And the silvery marish-flowers that
 throng
 The desolate creeks and pools among,
 Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work;
 Fold thy palms across thy breast,
 Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
 Let them rave.

Shadows of the silver birk
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander;
Nothing but the small cold worm
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.
Let them rave.
Light and shadow ever wander
O'er the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed;
Chanteth not the brooding bee
Sweeter tones than calumny?
Let them rave.
Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee;
The woodbine and eglare
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.
Let them rave.
Rain makes music in the tree
O'er the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
Bramble roses, faint and pale,
And long purples of the dale.
Let them rave.
These in every shower creep
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine;
The frail bluebell peereth over
Rare broidry of the purple clover.
Let them rave.
Kings have no such couch as thine,
As the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there;
God's great gift of speech abused
Makes thy memory confused:
But let them rave.
The balm-cricket carols clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was
gathering light
Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous
eyes;

When, turning round a cassia, full in
view,
Death, walking all alone beneath a
yew,
And talking to himself, first met his
sight:
"You must begone," said Death,
"these walks are mine."
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans
for flight;
Yet ere he parted said, "This hour is
thine:
Thou art the shadow of life, and as
the tree
Stands in the sun and shadows all
beneath,
So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of
death;
The shadow passeth when the tree
shall fall,
But I shall reign forever over all."

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.
There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.
When the long dun wolds are ribb'd
with snow,
And loud the Norland whirlwinds
blow,
Oriana,
Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.
Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,
At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana:
Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to battle going,
Oriana;
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,
Oriana.
In the yew-wood black as night,
Oriana,
Ere I rode into the fight,
Oriana,
While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
Oriana,
I to thee my troth did plight,
Oriana.
She stood upon the castle wall,
Oriana:
She watch'd my crest among them all,
Oriana:
She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there stept a foeman tall,
Oriana,
Atween me and the castle wall,
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
 The false, false arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
 The damned arrow glanced aside,
 And pierced thy heart, my love, my
 bride,
 Oriana !
 Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
 Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
 Oriana.
 Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,
 Oriana.
 Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
 The battle deepen'd in its place,
 Oriana ;
 But I was down upon my face,
 Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I
 lay,
 Oriana !
 How could I rise and come away,
 Oriana ?
 How could I look upon the day ?
 They should have stabb'd me where I
 lay,
 Oriana —
 They should have trod me into clay,
 Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,
 Oriana !
 O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
 Oriana !
 Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
 And then the tears run down my cheek,
 Oriana :
 What wantest thou ? whom dost thou
 seek,
 Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
 Oriana.
 Thou comest atween me and the skies,
 Oriana.
 I feel the tears of blood arise
 Up from my heart unto my eyes,
 Oriana.
 Within thy heart my arrow lies,
 Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
 Oriana !
 O happy thou that liest low,
 Oriana !
 All night the silence seems to flow
 Beside me in my utter woe,
 Oriana.
 A weary, weary way I go,
 Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the
 sea,
 Oriana,
 I walk, I dare not think of thee,
 Oriana.
 Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
 I dare not die and come to thee,
 Oriana.
 I hear the roaring of the sea,
 Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages
 Playing mad pranks along the heathy-
 leas ;
 Two strangers meeting at a festival ;
 Two lovers whispering by an orchard
 wall ;
 Two lives bound fast in one with
 golden ease ;
 Two graves grass-green beside a gray
 church-tower,
 Wash'd with still rains and daisy blos-
 somed ;
 Two children in one hamlet born and
 bred ;
 So runs the round of life from hour
 to hour.

THE MERMAN.

I.

Who would be
 A merman bold,
 Sitting alone,
 Singing alone
 Under the sea,
 With a crown of gold,
 On a throne ?

II.

I would be a merman bold,
 I would sit and sing the whole of the
 day ;
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice
 of power ;
 But at night I would roam abroad and
 play
 With the mermaids in and out of the
 rocks,
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-
 flower ;
 And holding them back by their flow-
 ing locks
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd
 me
 Laughingly, laughingly ;
 And then we would wander away, away
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight
 and high,
 Chasing each other merrily.

III.

There would be neither moon nor star;
But the wave would make music above
us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic
night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy
dells,

Call to each other and whoop and cry
All night, merrily, merrily;

They would pelt me with starry span-
gles and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands
between,

All night, merrily, merrily:

But I would throw to them back in
mine

Turkis and agate and almondine:

Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd me

Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh! what a happy life were mine

Under the hollow-hung ocean green!

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea;

We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

Who would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combing her hair
Under the sea,
In a golden curl
With a comb of pearl,
On a throne?

II.

I would be a mermaid fair;
I would sing to myself the whole of
the day;

With a comb of pearl I would comb
my hair;

And still as I comb'd I would sing and
say,

"Who is it loves me? who loves not
me?"

I would comb my hair till my ringlets
would fall

Low adown, low adown,

From under my starry sea-bud crown

Low adown and around,

And I should look like a fountain of
gold

Springing alone

With a shrill inner sound,

Over the throne

In the midst of the hall;

Till that great sea-snake under the sea

From his coiled sleeps in the central
deeps

Would slowly trail himself sevenfold

Round the hall where I sate, and look
in at the gate

With his large calm eyes for the love
of me.

And all the mermen under the sea

Would feel their immortality

Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III.

But at night I would wander away,
away,

I would fling on each side my low-
flowing locks,

And lightly vault from the throne and
play

With the mermen in and out of the
rocks;

We would run to and fro, and hide
and seek,

On the broad sea-wolds in the crim-
son shells,

Whose silvery spikes are nighest the
sea.

But if any came near I would call, and
shriek,

And adown the steep like a wave I
would leap

From the diamond-ledges that jut
from the dells;

For I would not be kiss'd by all who
would list,

Of the bold merry mermen under the
sea;

They would sue me, and woo me, and
flatter me,

In the purple twilights under the
sea;

But the king of them all would carry
me,

Woo me, and win me, and marry
me,

In the branching jaspers under the
sea;

Then all the dry pied things that be

In the hueless mosses under the sea

Would curl round my silver feet
silently,

All looking up for the love of me.

And if I should carol aloud, from aloft

All things that are forked, and horned,
and soft

Would lean out from the hollow sphere
of the sea,

All looking down for the love of
me.

ADELINE.

I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,

Faintly smiling Adeline,

Scarce of earth nor all divine,

Nor unhappy, nor at rest,

But beyond expression fair

With thy floating flaxen hair;

Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes
 Take the heart from out my
 breast.
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,
 Like a lily which the sun
 Looks thro' in his sad decline,
 And a rose-bush leans upon,
 Thou that faintly smilest still,
 As a Naiad in a well,
 Looking at the set of day,
 Or a phantom two hours old
 Of a maiden past away,
 Ere the placid lips be cold?
 Wherefore those faint smiles of
 thine,
 Spiritual Adeline?

III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine?
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline?
 For sure thou art not all alone.
 Do beating hearts of salient
 springs
 Keep measure with thine own?
 Hast thou heard the butterflies
 What they say betwixt their
 wings?
 Or in stillest evenings
 With what voice the violet woos
 To his heart the silver dew?
 Or when little airs arise,
 How the merry bluebell rings
 To the mosses underneath?
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath
 Of the lilies at sunrise?
 Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
 Shadowy, dreamy Adeline?

IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,
 Some spirit of a crimson rose
 In love with thee forgets to close
 His curtains, wasting odorous sighs
 All night long on darkness blind.
 What aileth thee? whom waitest thou
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
 When thou gazest at the skies?
 Doth the low-tongued Orient
 Wander from the side of the
 morn,
 Dripping with Sabæan spice
 On thy pillow, lowly bent
 With melodious airs lovelorn,
 Breathing Light against thy face,
 While his locks a-drooping twined
 Round thy neck in subtle ring

Make a carcanet of rays,
 And ye talk together still,
 In the language wherewith Spring
 Letters cowslips on the hill?
 Hence that look and smile of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline.

MARGARET.

I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret,
 What lit your eyes with tearful power,
 Like moonlight on a falling shower?
 Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
 Of pensive thought and aspect
 pale,
 Your melancholy sweet and frail
 As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
 From the westward-winding flood,
 From the evening-lighted wood,
 From all things outward you have
 won
 A tearful grace, as tho' you stood
 Between the rainbow and the sun.
 The very smile before you speak,
 That dimples your transparent
 cheek,
 Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
 The senses with a still delight
 Of dainty sorrow without sound,
 Like the tender amber round,
 Which the moon about her spread-
 eth,
 Moving thro' a fleecy night.

II.

You love, remaining peacefully,
 To hear the murmur of the strife,
 But enter not the toil of life.
 Your spirit is the calmed sea,
 Laid by the tumult of the fight.
 You are the evening star, alway
 Remaining betwixt dark and
 bright:
 Lull'd echoes of laborious day
 Come to you, gleams of mellow
 light
 Float by you on the verge of
 night.

III.

What can it matter, Margaret,
 What songs below the waning
 stars
 The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
 Sang looking thro' his prison
 bars?
 Exquisite Margaret, who can
 tell
 The last wild thought of Chatelet,
 Just ere the falling-axe did part
 The burning brain from the true
 heart,
 Even in her sight he loved so
 well?

IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made
 And gave you on your natal day.
 Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,
 Keeps real sorrow far away.
 You move not in such solitudes,
 You are not less divine,
 But more human in your moods,
 Than your twin-sister, Adeline.
 Your hair is darker, and your eyes
 Touch'd with a somewhat darker
 hue,

And less acially blue,
 But ever-trembling thro' the dew,
 Of dainty-woful sympathies.

V.

O sweet pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret,
 Come down, come down, and hear me
 speak :
 Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :
 The sun is just about to set,
 The arching limes are tall and shady,



*"O sweet pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret."*

And faint, rainy lights are seen,
 Moving in the leavy beech.
 Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
 Where all day long you sit
 between
 Joy and woe, and whisper each.
 Or only look across the lawn,
 Look out below your bower-caves,
 Look down, and let your blue eyes
 dawn
 Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon
 whither,
 Careless both of wind and weather,
 Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,
 Up or down the streaming wind ?

II.

The quick lark's closest-caroll'd
 strains,
 The shadow rushing up the sea,
 The lightning flash atween the rains,
 The sunlight driving down the lea,
 The leaping stream, the very wind,
 That will not stay, upon his way,
 To stoop the cowslip to the plains,
 Is not so clear and bold and free
 As you, my falcon Rosalind.
 You care not for another's pains,
 Because you are the soul of joy,
 Bright metal all without alloy.
 Life shoots and glances thro' your
 veins,

ROSALIND.

I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,
 Whose free delight, from any height
 of rapid flight,
 Stoops at all game that wing the skies,
 My Rosalind, my Rosalind,

And flashes off a thousand ways,
Thro' lips and eyes in subtle rays.
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,
Keen with triumph, watching still
To pierce me thro' with pointed light;
But oftentimes they flash and glitter
Like sunshine on a dancing rill,
And your words are seeming-bitter,
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter
From excess of swift delight.

III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind:
Too long you keep the upper skies;
Too long you roam and wheel at will;
But we must hood your random eyes,
That care not whom they kill,
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,
Some red heath-flower in the dew,
Touch'd with sunrise. We must bind
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,
And clip your wings, and make you
love:

When we have lured you from above,
And that delight of frolic flight, by
day or night,
From North to South,
We'll bind you fast in silken cords,
And kiss away the bitter words
From off your rosy mouth.

ELEÄNORE.

I.

Thy dark eyes open'd not,
Nor first reveal'd themselves to
English air,
For there is nothing here,
Which, from the outward to the inward
brought,
Moulded thy baby thought.
Far off from human neighborhood,
Thou wert born, on a summer
morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
Thy bounteous forehead was not
fann'd
With breezes from our oaken
glades,
But thou wert nursed in some delicious
land
Of lavish lights, and floating
shades:
And flattering thy childish thought
The oriental fairy brought,
At the moment of thy birth,
From old well-heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,
And shadow'd coves on a sunny
shore,
The choicest wealth of all the
earth,

Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
Thro' half-open lattices
Coming in the scented breeze,
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
With whitest honey in fairy gar-
dens cull'd —
A glorious child, dreaming alone,
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding
down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee?
Summer herself should minister
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
On golden salvers, or it may be,
Youngest Autumn, in a bower
Grape-thicken'd from the light, and
blinded
With many a deep-hued bell-like
flower
Of fragrant trailers, when the air
Sleepeth over all the heaven,
And the crag that fronts the Even,
All along the shadowing shore,
Crimsons over an inland mere,
Eleänore!

IV.

How many full-sail'd verse express,
How many measured words adore
The full-flowing harmony
Of thy swan-like stateliness,
Eleänore?
The luxuriant symmetry
Of thy floating gracefulness,
Eleänore?
Every turn and glance of thine,
Every lineament divine,
Eleänore,
And the steady sunset glow,
That stays upon thee? For in thee
Is nothing sudden, nothing single;
Like two streams of incense free
From one censer in one shrine,
Thought and motion mingle,
Mingle ever. Motions flow
To one another, even as tho'
They were modulated so
To an unheard melody,
Which lives about thee, and a sweep
Of richest pauses, evermore
Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
Who may express thee, Eleänore?

V.

I stand before thee, Eleänore;
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
Daily and hourly, more and more.
I muse, as in a trance, the while

Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
I muse, as in a trance, when'er
The languors of thy love-deep eyes
Float on to me. I would I were
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee forevermore,
Serene, imperial Eleänore!

VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity
Gazing, I seem to see
Thought folded over thought, smiling
asleep,
Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd
quite,
I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
But am as nothing in its light:
As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,
Ev'n while we gaze on it,
Should slowly round his orb, and
slowly grow
To a full face, there like a sun remain
Fix'd — then as slowly fade again,
And draw itself to what it was
before;
So full, so deep, so slow,
Thought seems to come and go
In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.

VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
Roof'd the world with doubt and
fear,
Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
Grow golden all about the sky;
In thee all passion becomes passion-
less,
Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,
Losing his fire and active might
In a silent meditation,
Falling into a still delight,
And luxury of contemplation:
As waves that up a quiet cove
Rolling slide, and lying still
Shadow forth the banks at will:
Or sometimes they swell and move,
Pressing up against the land,
With motions of the outer sea:
And the self-same influence
Controlleth all the soul and sense
Of Passion gazing upon thee.
His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
Droops both his wings, regarding
thee,
And so would languish evermore,
Serene, imperial Eleänore.

VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses
unconfined,
While the amorous, odorous wind

Breathes low between the sunset
and the moon;
Or, in a shadowy saloon,
On silken cushions half reclined;
I watch thy grace; and in its
place
My heart a charm'd slumber
keeps,
While I muse upon thy face;
And a languid fire creeps
Thro' my veins to all my frame,
Dissolvingly and slowly: soon
From thy rose-red lips my name
Floweth; and then, as in a swoon,
With dinning sound my ears are
rife,
My tremulous tongue faltereth,
I lose my color, I lose my breath,
I drink the cup of a costly death,
Brimm'd with delirious draughts of
warmest life.
I die with my delight, before
I hear what I would hear from
thee;
Yet tell my name again to me,
I *would* be dying evermore,
So dying ever, Eleänore.

I.

My life is full of weary days,
But good things have not kept aloof,
Nor wander'd into other ways:
I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink
Of that deep grave to which I go:
Shake hands once more: I cannot sink
So far — far down, but I shall know
Thy voice, and answer from below.

II.

When in the darkness over me
The four-handed mole shall scrape,
Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
Nor wreath thy cap with doleful
crape,
But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood
Grow green beneath the showery
gray,
And rugged barks begin to bud,
And thro' damp holts new-flush'd
with may,
Ring sudden scritchings of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,
And on my clay her darnel grow;
Come only, when the days are still,
And at my headstone whisper low,
And tell me if the woodbines blow.

EARLY SONNETS.

I.

TO —.

As when with downcast eyes we muse
 and brood,
 And ebb into a former life, or seem
 To lapse far back in some confused
 dream
 To states of mystical similitude ;
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his
 chair,
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and
 more,
 So that we say, " All this hath been
 before,
 All this hath been, I know not when
 or where."
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon
 your face,
 Our thought gave answer each to each,
 so true —
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
 That tho' I knew not in what time or
 place,
 Methought that I had often met with
 you,
 And either lived in either's heart and
 speech.

II.

TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee — thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
 To scare church-harpies from the
 master's feast ;
 Our dusted velvets have much need
 of thee :
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old
 saws,
 Distill'd from some worm-canker'd
 homily ;
 But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
 To embattail and to wall about thy
 cause
 With iron-worded proof, hating to hark
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-
 drone
 Half God's good sabbath, while the
 worn-out clerk
 Brow-beats his desk below. Thou
 from a throne
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the
 dark
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and
 mark.

III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full
 and free,
 Like some broad river rushing down
 alone,
 With the self-same impulse wherewith
 he was thrown
 From his loud fount upon the echoing
 lea : —

Which with increasing might doth for-
 ward flee

By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,
 and isle,

And in the middle of the green salt sea
 Keeps his blue waters fresh for many
 a mile.

Mine be the power, which ever to its
 sway

Will win the wise at once, and by
 degrees

May into uncongenial spirits flow ;
 Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of
 Florida

Floats far away into the Northern seas
 The lavish growths of southern Mex-
 ico.

IV.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right
 arm debased

The throne of Persia, when her Satrap
 bled

At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled
 Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits,
 disgraced

Forever — thee (thy pathway sand-
 erased)

Gliding with equal crowns two ser-
 pents led

Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-
 fed

Ammonian Oasis in the waste.

There in a silent shade of laurel brown
 Apart the Chamian Oracle divine

Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries :
 High things were spoken there, un-
 handed down ;

Only they saw thee from the secret
 shrine

Returning with hot cheek and kindled
 eyes.

V.

BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn
 hearts of oak,

Madman ! — to chain with chains, and
 bind with bands

That island queen who sways the floods
 and lands,

From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight
 woke,

When from her wooden walls, — lit by
 sure hands, —

With thunders, and with lightnings,
 and with smoke, —

Peal after peal, the British battle
 broke,

Lulling the brine against the Coptic
 sands.

We taught him lowlier moods, when
 Elsinore

Heard the war moan along the distant
 sea,

Rocking with shatter'd spars, with
sudden fires
Flamed over: at Trafalgar yet once
more
We taught him: late he learned
humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon
school'd with briers.

VI.

POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden
down,
And trampled under by the last and
least
Of men? The heart of Poland hath
not ceased
To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth
drown
The fields, and out of every smoulder-
ing town
Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-
creased,
Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the
East
Transgress his ample bound to some
new crown:—
Cries to Thee, "Lord, how long shall
these things be?
How long this icy-hearted Muscovite
Oppress the region?" Us, O Just and
Good,
Forgive, who smiled when she was torn
in three;
Us, who stand now, when we should
aid the right—
A matter to be wept with tears of
blood!

VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender
hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would
perch and stand,
And run thro' every change of sharp
and flat;
And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,
And chased away the still-recurring
gnat,
And woke her with a lay from fairy
land.
But now they live with Beauty less
and less,
For Hope is other Hope and wanders
far,
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious
creeds;
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single
star,
That sets at twilight in a land of
reeds.

VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent!
A nobler yearning never broke her
rest
Than but to dance and sing, be gayly
drest,
And win all eyes with all accomplish-
ment:
Yet in the whirling dances as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment blest
To find my heart so near the beauteous
breast
That once had power to rob it of con-
tent.
A moment came the tenderness of
tears,
The phantom of a wish that once could
move,
A ghost of passion that no smiles re-
store—
For ah! the slight coquette, she can-
not love,
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand
years,
She still would take the praise, and
care no more.

IX.

WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take
the cast
Of those dead lineaments that near
thee lie?
O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the
past,
In painting some dead friend from
memory?
Weep on: beyond his object Love can
last:
His object lives: more cause to weep
have I:
My tears, no tears of love, are flowing
fast,
No tears of love, but tears that Love
can die.
I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
Nor care to sit beside her where she
sits—
Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,
But breathe it into earth and close it
up
With secret death forever, in the pits
Which some green Christmas crams
with weary bones.

X.

IF I were loved, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of
the earth,
And range of evil between death and
birth,
That I should fear,—if I were loved
by thee?
All the inner, all the outer world of
pain

Clear Love would pierce and cleave,
 if thou wert mine,
 As I have heard that, somewhere in
 the main,
 Fresh-water springs come up through
 bitter brine.
 'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-
 hand with thee,
 To wait for death — mute — careless
 of all ills,
 Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge
 Of some new deluge from a thousand
 hills
 Flung leagues of roaring foam into
 the gorge
 Below us, as far on as eye could see.

XI.

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot
 was tied,
 Thine eyes so wept that they could
 hardly see;
 Thy sister smiled and said, "No tears
 for me!
 A happy bridesmaid makes a happy
 bride."
 And then, the couple standing side by
 side,
 Love lighted down between them full
 of glee,
 And over his left shoulder laugh'd at
 thee,
 "O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride."
 And all at once a pleasant truth I
 learn'd,
 For while the tender service made thee
 weep,
 I loved thee for the tear thou couldst
 not hide,
 And prest thy hand, and knew the
 press return'd,
 And thought, "My life is sick of sin-
 gle sleep:
 O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride!"

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

On either side of the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs forever

By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd.
 By slow horses; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:
 There the river eddy whirls,
 And there the surly village-churls,
 And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
 An abbot on an ambling pad,
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
 The knights come riding two and two;
 She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
 To weave the mirror's magic sights,
 For often thro' the silent nights
 A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot:
 Or when the moon was overhead,
 Came two young lovers lately wed;

"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight forever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily



"Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott."

As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-
leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight
glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse
trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,

She look'd down to Camelot.
 Out flew the web and floated wide;
 The mirror crack'd from side to side;
 "The curse is come upon me," cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 The broad stream in his banks complain-
 ing,
 Heavily the low sky raining,
 Over tower'd Camelot;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 And round about the prow she wrote
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
 Like some bold seer in a trance,
 Seeing all his own mischance —
 With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
 And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white,
 That loosely flew to left and right —
 The leaves upon her falling light —
 Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot:
 And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 And round the prow they read her
 name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
 And in the lighted palace near
 Died the sound of royal cheer;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
 But Lancelot mused a little space;
 He said, "She has a lovely face;

God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,
 "Thou art so full of misery,
 Were it not better not to be?"

Then to the still small voice I said;
 "Let me not cast in endless shade
 What is so wonderfully made."

To which the voice did urge reply;
 "To-day I saw the dragon-fly
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

"An inner impulse rent the veil
 Of his old husk: from head to tail
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

"He dried his wings: like gauze they
 grew;
 Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
 A living flash of light he flew."

I said, "When first the world began,
 Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
 And in the sixth she moulded man.

"She gave him mind, the lordliest
 Proportion, and, above the rest,
 Dominion in the head and breast."

Thereto the silent voice replied;
 "Self-blinded are you by your pride:
 Look up thro'night: the world is wide.

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,
 That in a boundless universe
 Is boundless better, boundless worse.

"Think you this mould of hopes and
 fears
 Could find no statelier than his peers
 In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind.
 "Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,
 Yet is there plenty of the kind."

Then did my response clearer fall:
 "No compound of this earthly ball
 Is like another, all in all."

To which he answer'd scoffingly;
 "Good soul! suppose I grant it thee,
 Who'll weep for thy deficiency?"

"Or will one beam be less intense,
 When thy peculiar difference
 Is cancell'd in the world of sense?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know,"

But my full heart, that work'd below,
Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me:

"Thou art so steep'd in misery,
Surely 'twere better not to be.

"Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
Nor any train of reason keep:
Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep."

I said, "The years with change advance:
If I make dark my countenance,
I shut my life from happier chance.

"Some turn this sickness yet might take,
Ev'n yet." But he: "What drug can make
A wither'd palsy cease to shake?"

I wept, "Tho' I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow;

"And men, thro' novel spheres of thought
Still moving after truth long sought,
Will learn new things when I am not."

"Yet," said the secret voice, "some time,
Sooner or later, will gray prime
Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

"Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

"Not less the bee would range her cells,
The fuzzy prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

I said that "all the years invent;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

"Were this not well, to bide mine hour,
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power?"

"The highest-mounted mind," he said,
"Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

"Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Just breaking over land and main?"

"Or make that morn, from his cold crown
And crystal silence creeping down,
Flood with full daylight glebe and town?"

"Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

"Thou hast not gain'd a real height,
Nor art thou nearer to the light,
Because the scale is infinite.

"'Twere better not to breathe or speak,
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

"Moreover, but to seem to find
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind."

I said, "When I am gone away,
'He dared not tarry,' men will say,
Doing dishonor to my clay."

"This is more vile," he made reply,
"To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,
Than once from dread of pain to die.

"Sick art thou — a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

"Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground?"

"The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

"Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Hears little of the false or just."

"Hard task, to pluck resolve," I cried,
"From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!"

"Nay — rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the days
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

"When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I paused and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

"I sung the joyful Pæan clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

"Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life —

"Some hidden principle to move,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of hate and
love —

"As far as might be, to carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind might orb
about —

"To search through all I felt or saw,
The springs of life, the depths of awe,
And reach the law within the law :

"At least, not rotting like a weed,
But, having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

"To pass when Life her light with-
draws,
Not void of righteous self-applause,
Nor in a merely selfish cause —

"In some good cause, not in mine own
To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown ;

"Whose eyes are dim with glorious
tears,
When soil'd with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ears :

"Then dying of a mortal stroke,
What time the foeman's line is broke,
And all the war is rolled in smoke."

"Yea!" said the voice, "thy dream
was good,
While thou abodest in the bud.
It was the stirring of the blood.

"If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour ?

"Then comes the check, the change,
the fall,
Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.
There is one remedy for all.

"Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,
Link'd month to month with such a
chain
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

"Thou hadst not between death and
birth
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
So were thy labor little-worth.

"That men with knowledge merely
play'd,
I told thee — hardly nigher made,
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade ;

"Much less this dreamer, deaf and
blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to
find,
That bears relation to the mind.

"For every worm beneath the moon
Draws different threads, and late and
soon
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

"Cry, faint not : either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn.

"Cry, faint not, climb : the summits
slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to
cope.

"Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

"I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

"If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou
dost strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

"And owning but a little more
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
Calling thyself a little lower

"Than angels. Cease to wail and
brawl !
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl ?
There is one remedy for all."

"O dull, one-sided voice," said I,
"Wilt thou make every thing a lie,
To flatter me that I may die ?

"I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

"I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

"Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream ;

"But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head —

"Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forebore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised
with stones :

"But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face."

The sullen answer slid betwixt :
"Not that the grounds of hope were
fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

"And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new :

"Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

"For I go, weak from suffering here :
Naked I go, and void of cheer :
What is it that I may not fear ?"

"Consider well," the voice replied,
"His face, that two hours since hath
died ;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

"Will he obey when one commands ?
Or answer should one press his hands ?
He answers not, nor understands.

"His palms are folded on his breast :
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

"His lips are very mild and meek :
Tho' one should smite him on the
cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

"His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonor to her race —

"His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

"He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

"High up the vapors fold and swim :
About him broods the twilight dim :
The place he knew forgetteth him."

"If 'all be dark, vague voice," I said,
"These things are wrapt in doubt and
dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

"The sap dries up : the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines.
Know I not Death ? the outward signs ?

"I found him when my years were few ;
A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

"From grave to grave the shadow
crept :
In her still place the morning wept :
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

"The simple senses crown'd his head.
'Omega ! thou art Lord,' they said,
'We find no motion in the dead.'

"Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by
these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

"Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense ?

"He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

"Here sits he shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery :
He names the name Eternity.

"That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And thro' thick veils to apprehend
A labor working to an end.

"The end and the beginning vex
His reason : many things perplex,
With motions, checks, and counter-
checks.

"He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something
good,
He may not do the thing he would.

"Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half shown, are broken and with-
drawn.

"Ah ! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt.

"But thou canst answer not again.
With thine own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

"The doubt would rest, I dare not
solve.
In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve."

As when a billow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I
fenced
A little ceased, but recommenced.

"Where wert thou when thy father
play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

"A merry boy they call'd him then,
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

"Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man :

"Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his days :

"A life of nothings, nothing-worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth !"

"These words," I said, "are like the
rest ;
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast :

"But if I grant, thou mightst defend
The thesis which thy words intend —
That to begin implies to end ;

"Yet how should I for certain hold
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould ?

"I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

"It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

"As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

"As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

"So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and
touch.

"But if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

"Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of
night ;

"Or if thro' lower lives I came —
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame —

"I might forget my weaker lot ;
For is not our first year forgot ?
The haunts of memory echo not.

"And men, whose reason long was
blind,
From cells of madness unconfined,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

"Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory :

"For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, could she climb
Beyond her own material prime ?

"Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams —

"Of something felt, like something
here ;
Of something done, I know not where ;
Such as no language may declare."

The still voice laugh'd. "I talk,"
said he,
"Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "hast missed thy
mark,
Who sought'st to wreck thy mortal
ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue
With this old soul in organs new ?

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human
breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want."

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
"Behold, it is the Sabbath morn."

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :
I spoke, but answer came there none :
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."

As from some blissful neighborhood,
A notice faintly understood,
"I see the end, and know the good."

A little hint to solace woe,
A hint, a whisper breathing low,
"I may not speak of what I know."

Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :
"What is it thou knowest, sweet
voice ?" I cried.

"A hidden hope," the voice replied :

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the
shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veil'eth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature's living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter showers :
You scarce could see the grass for
flowers.

I wonder'd while I paced along :
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of
wrong ;

And all so variously wrought,
I marvell'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, "Rejoice! Re-
joice!"

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,
His double chin, his portly size,
And who that knew him could forget
The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?
The slow wise smile that, round about
His dusty forehead dryly curl'd,
Seem'd half-within and half-without,
And full of dealings with the world ?

In yonder chair I see him sit,
Three fingers round the old silver
cup —

I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
At his own jest — gray eyes lit up
With summer lightnings of a soul
So full of summer warmth, so glad,
So healthy, sound, and clear and
whole,

His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
My own sweet Alice, we must die.
There's somewhat in this world amiss
Shall be unriddled by and by.
There's somewhat flows to us in life,
But more is taken quite away.
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth ?
I least should breathe a thought of
pain.

Would God renew me from my birth
I'd almost live my life again.

So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
And once again to woo thee mine —
It seems in after-dinner talk
Across the walnuts and the wine —

To be the long and listless boy
Late-left an orphan of the squire,
Where this old mansion mounted high
Looks down upon the village spire:
For even here, where I and you
Have lived and loved alone so long,
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'
By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove
In firry woodlands making moan;
But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
I had no motion of my own.
For scarce my life with fancy play'd
Before I dream'd that pleasant
dream —
Still hither thither idly sway'd
Like those long mosses in the
stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear
The milldam rushing down with
noise,
And see the minnows everywhere
In crystal eddies glance and poise,
The tail flag-flowers when they sprung
Below the range of stepping-stones,
Or those three chestnuts near, that
hung
In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
When after roving in the woods
('Twas April then), I came and sat
Below the chestnuts, when their
buds
Were glistening to the breezy blue;
And on the slope, an absent fool,
I cast me down, nor thought of you,
But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,
An echo from a measured strain,
Beat time to nothing in my head
From some odd corner of the brain.
It haunted me, the morning long,
With weary sameness in the rhymes,
The phantom of a silent song,
That went and came a thousand
times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood
I watch'd the little circles die;
They past into the level flood,
And there a vision caught my eye;
The reflex of a beauteous form,
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
As when a sunbeam wavers warm
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,
That morning, on the casement-edge
A long green box of mignonette,
And you were leaning from the
ledge:
And when I raised my eyes, above
They met with two so full and
bright —
Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,
That these have never lost their
light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
That I should die an early death:
For love possess'd the atmosphere,
And fill'd the breast with purer
breath.
My mother thought, What ails the
boy?
For I was alter'd, and began
To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
The dark round of the dripping
wheel,
The very air about the door
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below;
I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From off the wold I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the
mill;
And "by that lamp," I thought,
"she sits!"
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.
"O that I were beside her now!
O will she answer if I call?
O would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin:
And, in the pauses of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the
blind.
At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chair
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white
with may,

Your ripe lips moved not, but your
cheek

Flush'd like the coming of the day;
And so it was — half-sly, half-shy,
You would, and would not, little
one!

Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire:
She wish'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher;
And I was young — too young to wed:
"Yet must I love her for your sake;
Go fetch your Alice here," she said:
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:
But, Alice, you were ill at ease;
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not
please.

I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well;
And dew, that would have fall'n in
tears,

I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,
The doubt my mother would not
see;

She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me;
And turning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and, with a silent grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to
heart.

Ah, well — but sing the foolish song
I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive pair, and you were gay
With bridal flowers — that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestnuts whisper
by.

It is the miller's daughter
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles in her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,

With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet! which true love spells —
True love interprets — right alone.
His light upon the letter dwells,
For all the spirit is his own.
So, if I waste words now, in truth
You must blame Love. His early
rage

Had force to make me rhyme in youth,
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,
Like mine own life to me thou art,
Where Past and Present, wound in
one,

Do make a garland for the heart:
So sing that other song I made,
Half-anger'd with my happy lot,
The day, when in the chestnut shade
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that bath us in the net
Can he pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set.
Many a chance the years beget.
Love the gift is Love the debt.
Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.
Love is made a vague regret.
Eyes with idle tears are wet.
Idle habit links us yet.
What is love? for we forget:
Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True
wife,
Round my true heart thine arms in-
twine

My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine!
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes forever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them
well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their
part
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness past again,
And left a want unknown before,
Although the loss has brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee:
But that God bless thee, dear — who
wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind —
With blessings beyond hope or
thought,

With blessings which no words can
find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,
 To yon old mill across the wolds;
 For look, the sunset, south and north,
 Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
 And fires your narrow casement glass,
 Touching the sullen pool below:
 On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
 Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering
 might!

O sun, that from thy noonday height
 Shudderest when I strain my sight,
 Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,
 Lo, falling from my constant mind,
 Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and
 blind,

I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours
 Below the city's eastern towers:
 I thirsted for the brooks, the showers:
 I roll'd among the tender flowers:
 I crush'd them on my breast, my
 mouth;

I look'd athwart the burning drouth
 Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his
 name,

From my swift blood that went and
 came

A thousand little shafts of flame
 Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.

O Love, O fire! once he drew
 With one long kiss my whole soul
 thro'

My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know
 He cometh quickly: from below
 Sweet gales, as from deep gardens,
 blow

Before him, striking on my brow.
 In my dry brain my spirit soon,
 Drown-deepening from swoon to
 swoon,

Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,
 And from beyond the noon a fire
 Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher
 The skies stoop down in their desire;
 And, isled in sudden seas of light,
 My heart, pierced thro' with fierce
 delight,
 Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,
 All naked in a sultry sky,
 Droops blinded with his shining eye:
 I will possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,
 Grow, live, die looking on his face,
 Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapor slopes athwart
 the glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from
 pine to pine,
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
 hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges mid-
 way down

Hang rich in flowers, and far below
 them roars

The long brook falling thro' the
 clov'n ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
 Stands up and takes the morning: but
 in front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
 Mournful Cœnone, wandering forlorn
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the
 hills.

Her cheek had lost the rose, and round
 her neck

Floated her hair or seem'd to float in
 rest.

She, leaning on a fragment twined
 with vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
 shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the
 upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd
 Ida,

Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 For now the noonday quiet holds the
 hill:

The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
 The lizard, with his shadow on the
 stone,

Rests like a shadow, and the winds
 are dead.

The purple flower droops: the golden
 bee

Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.

My eyes are full of tears, my heart of
 love,

My heart is breaking, and my eyes
 are dim,

And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd
 Ida,

Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills,

O Caves

That house the cold crown'd snake! O
 mountain brooks,
 I am the daughter of a River God,
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build
 up all
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder
 walls
 Rose slowly to a music slowly
 breathed,
 A cloud that gather'd shape: for it
 may be
 That, while I speak of it, a little while
 My heart may wander from its deeper
 woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd
 Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 I waited underneath the dawning hills,
 Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-
 dark,
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain
 pine:
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
 white-hooved,
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Far-off the torrent call'd me from the
 cleft:
 Far up the solitary morning smote
 The streaks of virgin snow. With
 down-dropt eyes
 I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
 Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard
 skin
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his
 sunny hair
 Cluster'd about his temples like a
 God's:
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-
 bow brightens
 When the wind blows the foam, and
 all my heart
 Went forth to embrace him coming
 ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-
 white palm
 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian
 gold,
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I
 look'd
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
 speech
 Came down upon my heart.
 "My own Cenone,
 Beautiful-brow'd Cenone, my own soul,
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
 ingrav'n
 "For the most fair," would seem to
 award it thine,
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt

The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
 Of movement, and the charm of mar-
 ried brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
 And added 'This was cast upon the
 board,
 When all the full-faced presence of
 the Gods
 Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where-
 upon
 Rose feud, with question unto whom
 'twere due:
 But light-foot Iris brought it yester-
 eve,
 Delivering, that to me, by common
 voice
 Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
 Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
 This meed of fairest. Thou, within
 the cave
 Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest
 pine,
 Mayst well behold them unbeheld,
 unheard
 Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of
 Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 It was the deep midnight: one silvery
 cloud
 Had lost his way between the piney
 sides
 Of this long glen. Then to the bower
 they came,
 Naked they came to that smooth-
 swarded bower,
 And at their feet the crocus brake like
 fire,
 Violet, amaranthus, and asphodel,
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
 And overhead the wandering ivy and
 vine,
 This way and that, in many a wild
 festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled
 boughs
 With bunch and berry and flower thro'
 and thro'.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud,
 and lean'd
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant
 dew.
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to
 whom
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that
 grows
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the
 Gods
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris
 made

Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 Unquestion'd overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from
 many a vale
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
 with corn,
 Or labor'd mine undrainable of ore.
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax
 and toll,
 From many an inland town and haven
 large,
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
 citadel
 In glassy bays among her tallest
 towers.'

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Still she spake on and still she spake
 of power,
 'Which in all action is the end of all;
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-
 bred
 And throned of wisdom — from all
 neighbor crowns
 Alliance and Allegiance, till thy hand
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such
 boon from me,
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to
 thee king-born,
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-
 born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing
 men in power
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly
 fruit
 Out at arm's-length, so much the
 thought of power
 Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where
 she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared
 limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed
 spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest
 eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry
 cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made
 reply.

" 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge,
 self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sover-
 eign power.
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live
 by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear;

And, because right is right, to follow
 right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-
 quence.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Again she said: 'I woo thee not with
 gifts.
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I
 am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of
 fair,
 Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee
 sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave
 to thee,
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a
 God's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of
 shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance
 grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown
 will,
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceas'd,
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O
 Paris,
 Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me
 not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is
 me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida.
 Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 Italian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in
 Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward
 drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her
 deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid
 throat
 And shoulder: from the violets her
 light foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded
 form
 Between the shadows of the vine-
 bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she
 moved.

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
 She with a subtle smile in her mild
 eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing
 nigh
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise
 thee

The fairest and most loving wife in
Greece,
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my
sight for fear:
But when I look'd, Paris had raised
his arm,
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not
fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand
times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by, a wild and wanton
pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with play-
ful tail
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that
my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot
lips prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-
falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn
rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest
pines,
My tall dark pines, that plumed the
craggy ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all
between
The snowy peak and snow-white cata-
ract
Foster'd the callow eaglet — from be-
neath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the
dark morn
The panther's roar came muffled, while
I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Cenone see the morning
mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them
overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver
cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trem-
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd
folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from
the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with
her

The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the
board,
And bred this change; that I might
speak my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I
hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand
times,
In this green valley, under this green
hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this
stone?
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with
tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to
these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see
my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear
my weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-float-
ing cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this
earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to
live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of
life,
And shadow all my soul that I may
die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart
within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me
die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more
and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the
inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a
mother
Conjectures of the features of her
child
Ere it is born: her child! — a shudder
comes
Across me: never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's
eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come
to me
Walking the cold and starless road of
Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love

With the Greek woman. I will rise
and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars
come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she
says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I
know
That, whereso'er I am by night and
day,
All earth and air seem only burning
fire."

THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race:
She was the fairest in the face:
The wind is blowing in turret and
tree.

They were together, and she fell;
Therefore revenge became me well.
O the Earl was fair to see!

She died: she went to burning flame:
She mix'd her ancient blood with
shame.

The wind is howling in turret and
tree.

Whole weeks and months, and early
and late,

To win his love I lay in wait:
O the Earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;
I won his love, I brought him home.
The wind is roaring in turret and
tree.

And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid his head:
O the Earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest:
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
The wind is raging in turret and tree.
I hated him with the hate of hell.
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see!

I rose up in the silent night:
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree.
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and
thro'.

O the Earl was fair to see!

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
He look'd so grand when he was dead.
The wind is blowing in turret and
tree.

I wrapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet.

O the Earl was fair to see!

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering
weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and
brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty
seen
In all varieties of mould and mind)
And Knowledge for its beauty; or if
Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge,
are three sisters
That dote upon each other, friends to
man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sunder'd without
tears.
And he that shuts Love out, in turn
shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her thresh-
old lie
Howling in outer darkness. Not for
this
Was common clay ta'en from the com-
mon earth
Moulded by God, and temper'd with
the tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-
house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, "O Soul, make merry and
carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as bur-
nish'd brass

I chose. The ranged ramparts
bright

From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or
shelf

The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and
round," I said,

"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stead-
fast shade

Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer
readily:

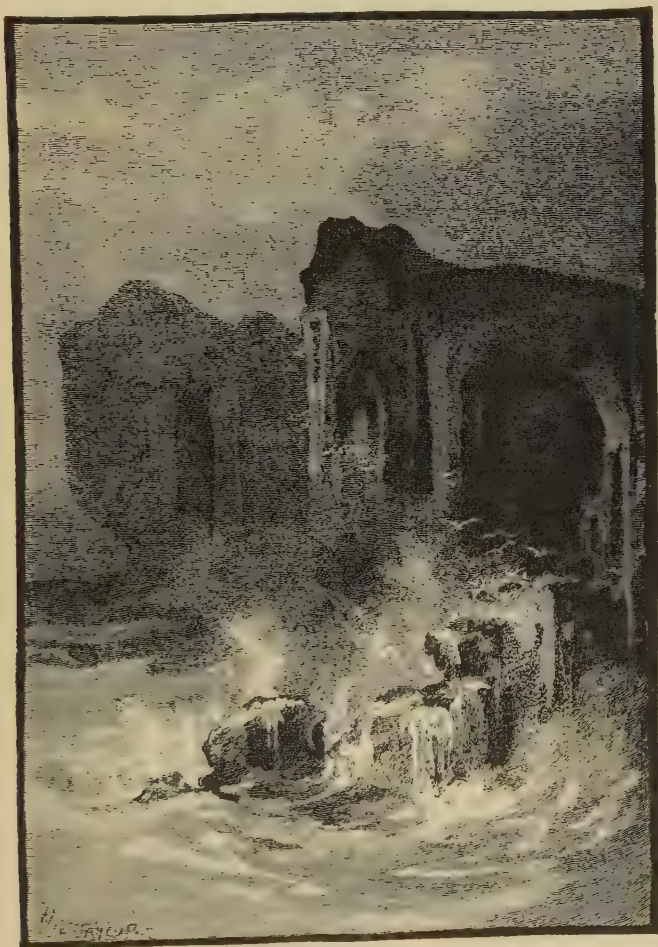
"Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
In this great mansion that is built for
me,
So royal-rich and wide."

* * * *
* * * *

Four courts I made, East, West and
South and North,

In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted
forth
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there
ran a row
Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty
woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods.



*"One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall."*

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
That lent broad verge to distant
lands,
Far as the wild swan wings, to where
the sky
Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in
one swell
Across the mountain stream'd below
In misty folds, that floating as they
fell
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue
seem'd
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odor
steam'd
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall
gaze upon
My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will waver in the
sun,
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never
fail'd,
And, while day sank or mounted
higher,
The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
and traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson
fires
From shadow'd grots of arches inter-
laced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

* * * *
* * * *

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul
did pass,
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the
palace stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green
and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted
hunter blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red — a tract
of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced forever in a glimmering
land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
waves.
You seem'd to hear them climb and
fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellow-
ing caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding
low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry
toil.
In front they bound the sheaves.
Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in
oil,
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with
stones and slags,
Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the
scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray
twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep — all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape
fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern,
was there
Not less than truth design'd.

* * * *
* * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm.
Beneath branch-work of costly sardo-
nyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St.
Cecily;
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and
eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded
son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian
king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.



*"On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep."*

Or over hills with peaky tops en-
grail'd,
And many a tract of palm and
rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly
sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-
clasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward
borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus: one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh

Half-buried in the Eagle's down
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was
there,
Not less than life, design'd.

* * * *

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver
sound ;
And with choice paintings of wise men
I hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph
strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and
mild ;
And there the world-worn Dante
grasp'd his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the
rest ;
A million wrinkles carved his skin ;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his
breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-
set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every
land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden
slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads
and stings ;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break
or bind
All force in bonds that might en-
dure,
And here once more like some sick
man declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those
great bells
Began to chime. She took her
throne :

She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colored
flame
Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Veru-
lam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their
motion were
Full-welling fountain-heads of
change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were bla-
zon'd fair
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,
emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples, and her eyes.
And from her lips, as morn from
Memnon, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd
song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feast-
ful mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these
are mine,
And let the world have peace or
wars,
'Tis one to me." She — when young
night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious
toils —
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious
oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her
hands and cried,
" I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and
wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

" O all things fair to sate my various
eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me
well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

"O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening
droves of swine
That range on yonder plain.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient
skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she
prate
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd
Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and
deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

* * * * *

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd: so
three years
She prosper'd: on the fourth she
fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in
his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote, "Mene, mene," and divided
quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her soli-
tude
Fell on her, from which mood was
born
Scorn of herself; again, from out that
mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of
strength," she said,
"My spacious mansion built for me,

Whereof the strong foundation-stones
were laid
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping
tears of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon
she came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without
light
Or power of movement, seem'd my
soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars
of sand,
Left on the shore; that hears all
night
The plunging seas draw backward
from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry
dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing
saw
The hollow orb of moving Circum-
stance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
curl'd.
"No voice," she shriek'd in that
lone hall,
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness
of this world:
One deep, deep silence all!"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering sod,
Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with
fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime:

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt
round

With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully
sound

Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walk-
ing slow,

In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a
sound

Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
cry

Of great wild beasts; then thinketh,
"I have found

A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, "I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.

What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly fin-
ished,

She threw her royal robes away.

"Make me a cottage in the vale," she
said,

"Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,
that are

So lightly beautifully built:

Perchance I may return with others
there

When I have purged my guilt."

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,

Of me you shall not win renown:

You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.

At me you smiled, but unbeguiled

I saw the snare, and I retired:

The daughter of a hundred Earls,

You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

I know you proud to bear your
name,

Your pride is yet no mate for mine,

Too proud to care from whence I
came.

Nor would I break for your sweet sake

A heart that dotes on truer charms.

A simple maiden in her flower

Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

Some meeker pupil you must find,

For were you queen of all that is,

I could not stoop to such a mind.

You sought to prove how I could love;

And my disdain is my reply.

The lion on your old stone gates

Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

You put strange memories in my
head.

Not thrice your branching limes have
blown

Since I beheld young Laurence
dead.

Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies:

A great enchantress you may be;

But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

When thus he met his mother's
view,

She had the passions of her kind,

She spake some certain truths of
you.

Indeed I heard one bitter word

That scarce is fit for you to hear;

Her manners had not that repose

Which stamps the caste of Vere de
Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,

There stands a spectre in your hall:

The guilt of blood is at your door:

You changed a wholesome heart to
gall.

You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest

worth,

And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,

And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,

From yon blue heavens above us
bent

The gardener Adam and his wife

Smile at the claims of long descent.

Howe'er it be, it seems to me,

'Tis only noble to be good.

Kind hearts are more than coronets,

And simple faith than Norman
blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,

You pine among your halls and
towers:

The languid light of your proud eyes

Is wearied of the rolling hours.

In glowing health, with boundless
wealth,

But sickening of a vague disease,

You know so ill to deal with time,

You needs must play such pranks
as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,

If time be heavy on your hands,

Are there no beggars at your gate,

Nor any poor about your lands?

Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read,

Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,

Pray Heaven for a human heart,

And let the foolish yeoman go.

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;
 Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day ;
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;
 There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :
 But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
 So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.



" And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May."

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
 If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :
 But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
 But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?
 He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,
 But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
 And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
 They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be :
 They say his heart is breaking, mother — what is that to me ?
 There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
 And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen;
 For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers;
 And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
 And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;
 There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
 And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
 And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year:
 To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
 It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
 Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and left behind
 The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind;
 And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
 The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day;
 Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May;
 And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,
 Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
 I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
 I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
 I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
 And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
 And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the wave,
 But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
 In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
 Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
 When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
 You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night;
 When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
 On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
 And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
 I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
 With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;
 You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ;
 Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
 You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place ;
 Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face ;
 Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall hearken what you say,
 And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have said good-night forevermore,
 And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door ;
 Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green :
 She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :
 Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :
 But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rosebush that I set
 About the parlor-window and the box of mignonette.

Good-night, sweet mother : call me before the day is born.
 All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;
 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
 So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;
 And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !
 To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
 And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
 And sweeter far is death than life to me that long, to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !
 But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;
 And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !
 O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
 It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;
 The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
 And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;
 I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;
 With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,
 And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me — I know not what was said;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, "It's not for them: it's mine."
And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived — I cannot tell — I might have been his wife;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine —
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun —
Forever and forever with those just souls and true —
And what is life, that we should moan? why make we such ado?

Forever and forever, all in a blessed home —
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come —
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast —
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed
toward the land,

"This mounting wave will roll us
shoreward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a
land

In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the slender
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and
fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,
did go;

And some thro' wavering lights and
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam
below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land: far off, three
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd; and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low
adown

In the red West: thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow
down

Border'd with palm, and many a wind-
ing vale

And meadow, set with slender galin-
gale;

A land where all things always seem'd
the same!

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-
eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of
 them,
 And taste, to him the gushing of the
 wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and
 rave
 On alien shores; and if his fellow
 spake,



*"And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem."*

His voice was thin, as voices from the
 grave;
 And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all
 awake,
 And music in his ears his beating heart
 did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow
 sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the
 shore;
 And sweet it was to dream of Father-
 land,
 Of child and wife, and slave; but
 evermore
 Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
 oar,
 Weary the wandering fields of barren
 foam.

Then some one said, "We will return
no more ;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island
home
Is far beyond the wave ; we will no
longer roam."

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer
falls
Than petals from blown roses on the
grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between
walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming
pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down
from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved
flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness ?
All things have rest : why should we
toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of
things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another
thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm ;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit
sings,
"There is no joy but calm !"
Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the
bud
With winds upon the branch, and
there
Grows green and broad, and takes no
care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-
mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath
no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labor be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward
fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and be-
come
Portions and parcels of the dreadful
Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we
have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing
wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death,
or dreamful ease.

V.

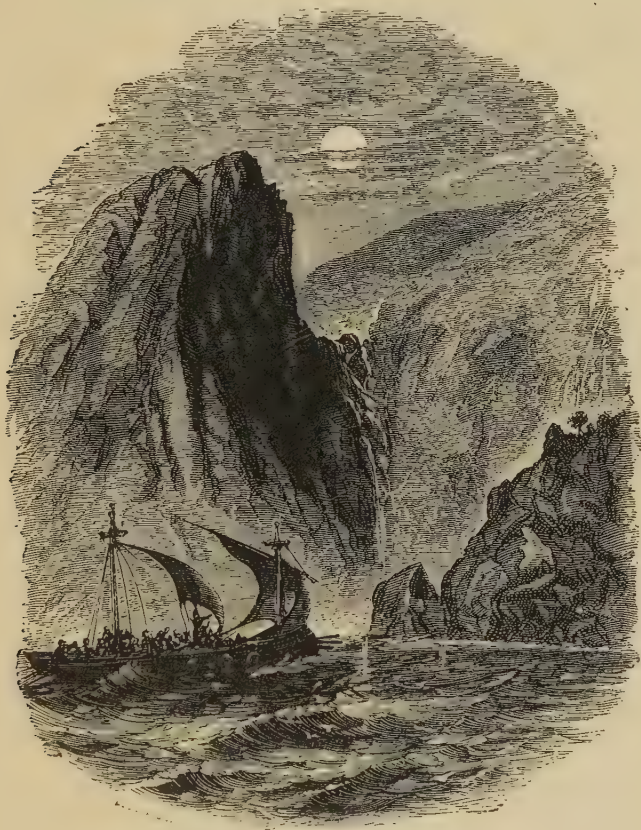
How sweet it were, hearing the down-
ward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder
amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush
on the height ;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the
beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy
spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirit wholly
To the influence of mild-minded mel-
ancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in
memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in
an urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded
lives,
And dear the last embraces of our
wives

And their warm tears : but all hath
 suffer'd change :
 For surely now our household hearths
 are cold :
 Our sons inherit us : our looks are
 strange :
 And we should come like ghosts to
 trouble joy.
 Or else the island princes over-bold

Have eat our substance, and the min-
 strel sings,
 Before them of the ten years' war in
 Troy,
 And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
 things.
 Is there confusion in the little isle ?
 Let what is broken so remain.
 The Gods are hard to reconcile :



"O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more."

'Tis hard to settle order once again.
 There is confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labor unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many
 wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on
 the pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and
 moly,

How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
 blowing lowly)
 With half-dropt eyelid still,
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river draw-
 ing slowly
 His waters from the purple hill —
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-
 twined vine —
 To watch the emerald-color'd water
 falling

Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off spar-
kling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren
peak:
The Lotos blows by every-winding
creek:
All day the wind breathes low with
mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and
of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething
free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with
an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and
lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, care-
less of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and
the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and
the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled
with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking
over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earth-
quake, roaring deeps and fiery
sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns,
and sinking ships, and praying
hands.
But they smile, they find a music cen-
tered in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an
ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men
that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest
with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat,
and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—
some, 'tis whisper'd—down in
hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in
Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds
of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
than toil, the shore

Than labor in the deep mid-ocean,
wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will
not wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their
shade,
"The Legend of Good Women," long
ago
Sung by the morning-star of song,
who made
His music heard below;
Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose
sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that
fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.
And, for a while, the knowledge of
his art
Held me above the subject, as
strong gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining,
tho' my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,
Charged both mine eyes with tears.
In every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in
hand
The downward slope to death.
Those far-renowned brides of ancient
song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burn-
ing stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame,
and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars;
And clattering flints batter'd with
clanging hoofs;
And I saw crowds in column'd
sanctuaries;
And forms that pass'd at windows
and on roofs
Of marble palaces;
Corpses across the threshold; heroes
tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;
Lances in ambush set;
And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts
That run before the fluttering
tongues of fire;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails
and masts,
And ever climbing higher;

Squadrons and squares of men in
brazen plates,
Scaffolds, still sheets of water,
divers woes,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with
iron grates,
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as,
when to land
Bluster the winds and tides the
self-same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the
level sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in
pain,
Resolved on noble things, and
strove to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along
the brain,
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew
down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd
town;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-
lapping thought
Stream'd onward, lost their edges,
and did creep
Roll'd on each other, rounded,
smooth'd, and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wan-
der'd far
In an old wood: fresh-wash'd in
coolest dew
The maiden splendors of the morning
star
Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop
and lean
Upon the dusky brushwood under-
neath
Their broad curved branches, fledged
with clearest green,
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her
journey done,
And with dead lips smiled at the
twilight plain,
Half-fall'n across the threshold of
the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb
dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of
rill;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of
jasmine turn'd
Their humid arms festooning tree
to tree,
And at the root thro' lush green
grasses burn'd
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,
I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid
dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks
drench'd in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the
green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul
and frame
The times when I remember to have
been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-
tone
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that un-
blissful clime,
"Pass freely thro': the wood is all
thine own,
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stillter than chisell'd marble, stand-
ing there;
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with
surprise
Froze my swift speech: she turning
on my face
The star-like sorrows of immortal
eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty: ask thou not
my name:
No one can be more wise than
destiny.
Many drew swords and died.
Where'er I came
I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair
field
Myself for such a face had boldly
died,"

I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks
averse,

To her full height her stately stature draws;

"My youth," she said "was blasted
with a curse:

This woman was the cause.

"I was cut off from hope in that sad
place,

Which men call'd Aulis in those
iron years:

My father held his hand upon his face;
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could
descry

The stern black-bearded kings with
wolfish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay
afloat;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd,
and the shore;

The bright death quiver'd at the vic-
tim's throat;

Touch'd; and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward
brow:

"I would the white cold heavy-
plunging foam,

Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me
deëp below,

Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the
silence drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping
sea:

Sudden I heard a voice that cried,
"Come here,

That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery
rise,

One sitting on a crimson scarf un-
roll'd;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and
bold black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile,
began:

"I govern'd men by change, and
so I sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have
seen a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the
blood

According to my humor ebb and
flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood:
That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could
not bend

One will; nor tame and tutor with
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Cæsar.
Prythee, friend,

Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I
rode sublime

On Fortune's neck: we sat as God
by God:

The Nilus would have risen before his
time

And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,
and lit

Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus.
O my life

In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from
war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my

arms,

Contented there to die!

"And there he died: and when I heard
my name

Sigh'd forth with life I would not
brook my fear

Of the other: with a worm I balk'd
his fame.

What else was left? look here!"

(With that she tore her robe apart,
and half

The polish'd argent of her breast to
sight

Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with
a laugh,

Showing the aspick's bite.)

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,

A name forever!—lying robed and
crown'd,

Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
change
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
delight :
Because with sudden motion from
the ground

She rais'd her piercing orbs, and fill'd
with light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keen-
est darts ;
As once they drew into two burning
rings



*"The daughter of the warrior Gileadite :
A maiden pure."*

All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I
heard
A noise of some one coming thro'
the lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested
bird
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd
Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late
and soon,

Sound all night long, in falling thro'
the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with
beams divine:
All night the splinter'd crags that wall
the dell
With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-
shine laves
The lawn by some cathedral, thro'
the door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd
and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I,
when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite;
A maiden pure; as when she went
along
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with wel-
come light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth: "Heaven heads
the count of crimes
With that wild oath." She render'd
answer high:
"Not so, nor once alone; a thousand
times
I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,
whose root
Creeps to the garden, water-pipes
beneath
Feeding the flower; but ere my flower
to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these
did move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature
gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord
of love
Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair
Hebrew boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame
among
The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of
all joy,
Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal
bower;

The valleys of grape-loaded vines that
glow
Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us.
Anon
We heard the lion roaring from his
den;
We saw the large white stars rise one
by one,—
Or, from the darken'd glen,

"Saw God divide the night with flying
flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief
became
A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was roll'd into
the sky,
Strength came to me that equall'd
my desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought
to dwell,
That I subdued me to my father's
will;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I
fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover it is written that my race
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her
face
Glow'd as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips: she left me where
I stood:
"Glory to God," she sang, and past
afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the
wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
As one that from a casement leans
his head,
When midnight bells cease ringing
suddenly,
And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of
care,
Murmur'd beside me. "Turn and
look on me:
I am that Rosamond, whom men call
fair,
If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden
coarse and poor!
O me, that I should ever see the
light!

Those dragon eyes of anger'd
Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope
and trust:
To whom the Egyptian: "O, you
tamely died!

You should have clung to Fulvia's
waist, and thrust
The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white
dawn's creeping beams,
Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the
mystery



"Joan of Arc,
A light of Ancient France."

Of folded sleep. The captain of my
dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of
the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her
last trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan
of Arc,
A light of ancient France;

Or her who knew that Love can van-
quish Death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about
her king,

Drew forth the poison with her balmy
breath,
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the
deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the
hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from
sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With
what dull pain—
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
strike

Into that wondrous track of dreams
again!
But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath
been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past
years,

In yearnings that can never be exprest
By signs or groans or tears;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with
choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the
sweet,

Wither beneath the palate, and the
heart

Faints, faded by its heat.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something
well:

While all the neighbors shoot thee
round,

I keep smooth plats of fruitful
ground,

Where thou may'st warble, eat and
dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine; the range of lawn and
park:

The unnetted black-hearts ripen
dark,

All thine, against the garden wall

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry:
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when
young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute notes are changed to
coarse,

I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are
new,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily
sighing:

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move:
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true true-
love,

And the New-year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go;
So long as you have been with us
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my
friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold,
my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps: the light burns
low:

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
 Shake hands, before you die.
 Old year, we'll dearly rue for you:
 What is it we can do for you?
 Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
 Alack! our friend is gone.
 Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:
 Step from the corpse, and let him in
 That standeth there alone,
 And waiteth at the door.
 There's a new foot on the floor,
 my friend,
 And a new face at the door, my
 friend,
 A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,
 blows
 More softly round the open wold,
 And gently comes the world to those
 That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,
 Or else I had not dared to flow
 In these words toward you, and invade
 Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on
 most,
 Those in whose laps our limbs
 are nursed,
 Fall into shadow, soonest lost:
 Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
 He lends us; but, when love is
 grown
 To ripeness, that on which it throve
 Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas!
 In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
 Once thro' mine own doors Death did
 pass;
 One went, who never hath re-
 turn'd.

He will not smile — not speak to me
 Once more. Two years his chair
 is seen
 Empty before us. That was he
 Without whose life I had not
 been.

Your loss is rarer; for this star
 Rose with you thro' a little arc
 Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
 Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother: his mute dust
 I honor and his living worth:
 A man more pure and bold and just
 Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,
 Since that dear soul hath fall'n
 asleep.

Great Nature is more wise than I:
 I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,
 Drawn from the spirit thro' the
 brain,
 I will not even preach to you,
 "Weep, weeping dulls the inward
 pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
 She loveth her own anguish deep
 More than much pleasure. Let her
 will
 Be done — to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, "God's ordinance
 Of Death is blown in every wind";
 For that is not a common chance
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
 In all our hearts, as mournful light
 That broods above the fallen sun,
 And dwells in heaven half the
 night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near
 Cast down her eyes, and in her
 throat
 Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,
 Who miss the brother of your youth?
 Yet something I did wish to say:

For he too was a friend to me:
 Both are my friends, and my true
 breast
 Bleedeth for both; yet it may be
 That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would
 make
 Grief more. 'Twere better I
 should cease

Although myself could almost take
 The place of him that sleeps in
 peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
 While the stars burn, the moons in-
 crease,
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
 Nothing comes to thee new or
 strange.

Sleep full of rest from head to feet;
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of
 change.

ON A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
Imitates God, and turns her face
To every land beneath the skies,
Counts nothing that she meets with
base,
But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
And makes the purple lilac ripe,
Steps from her airy hill, and greens
The swamp, where hums the dropping
snipe,
With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
Saying, " Beat quicker, for the time
Is pleasant, and the woods and ways
Are pleasant, and the beech and
lime
Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,
Going before to some far shrine,
Teach that sick heart the stronger
choice,
Till all thy life one way incline
With one wide Will that closes thine.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
Where yon dark valleys wind for-
lorn,
Come Hope and Memory, spouse and
bride,
From out the borders of the morn,
With that fair child betwixt them
born.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tombing
sod,
Thro' silence and the trembling stars
Comes Faith from tracts no feet
have trod,
And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire ; such as those
Once heard at dead of night to greet
Troy's wandering prince, so that he
rose
With sacrifice, while all the fleet
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends
or foes
A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens
down
From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fulness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive
thought
Hath time and space to work and
spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil
crime,
And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land
to land
The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden
sand —

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Or old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet:
Above her shook the starry lights :
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt she down thro' town and
field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fulness of her face —

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down :
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown ;

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and
shine,
Make bright our days and light
our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes !

Love thou thy land, with love far-
brought
From out the storied Past, and
used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen,
friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble
wings
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the
winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of
minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the
years :
Cut Prejudice against the grain :
But gentle words are always gain :
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise :
It grows to guerdon after-days :
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
Nor master'd by some modern term ;
Not swift nor slow to change, but
firm :
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly,
binds —
Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interest of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be
free
To ingroove itself with that which
flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school ;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States —

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;
And round them sea and air are
dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head ;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war —

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall
close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and
guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
 Would serve his kind in deed and
 word,
 Certain, if knowledge bring the
 sword,
 That knowledge takes the sword
 away —

Would love the gleams of good that
 broke
 From either side, nor veil his eyes:
 And if some dreadful need should
 rise
 Would strike, and firmly, and one
 stroke:

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
 As we bear blossom of the dead;
 Earn well the thrifty months, nor
 wed
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782.

O thou, that sendest out the man
 To rule by land and sea,
 Strong mother of a Lion-line,
 Be proud of those strong sons of thine
 Who wrench'd their rights from
 thee!

What wonder, if in noble heat
 Those men thine arms withstood,
 Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,
 And in thy spirit with thee fought —
 Who sprang from English blood!

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
 Lift up thy rocky face.
 And shatter, when the storms are
 black,
 In many a streaming torrent back,
 The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law
 The growing world assume,
 Thy work is thine — The single note
 From that deep chord which Hampden
 smote
 Will vibrate to the doom.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
 Her rags scarce held together;
 There strode a stranger to the door,
 And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd rhyme and reason,
 "Here, take the goose, and keep you
 warm,
 It is a stormy season."

She caught the white goose by the leg,
 A goose — 'twas no great matter.
 The goose let fall a golden egg
 With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the
 pelf,
 And ran to tell her neighbors;
 And bless'd herself, and curs'd herself,
 And rested from her labors.

And feeding high, and living soft,
 Grew plump and able-bodied;
 Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,
 The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
 She felt her heart grow prouder:
 But ah! the more the white goose laid
 It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there;
 It stirr'd the old wife's mettle:
 She shifted in her elbow-chair,
 And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

"A quinsy choke thy curs'd note!"
 Then wax'd her anger stronger.
 "Go, take the goose, and wring her
 throat,
 I will not bear it longer."

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the
 cat;
 Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
 The goose flew this way and flew that,
 And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor
 They flounder'd all together,
 There strode a stranger to the door,
 And it was windy weather:

He took the goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd words of scorning;
 "So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
 It is a stormy morning."

The wild wind rang from park and
 plain,
 And round the attics rumbled,
 Till all the tables danced again,
 And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
 The blast was hard and harder.
 Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
 And a whirlwind clear'd the larder:

And while on all sides breaking loose
 Her household fled the danger,
 Quoth she, "The Devil take the goose,
 And God forget the stranger!"

ENGLISH IDYLS AND OTHER POEMS.

THE EPIC.

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve, —
The game of forfeits done — the girls
all kiss'd
Beneath the sacred bush and past
away —
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard
Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-
bowl,
Then half-way ebb'd: and there we
held a talk,
How all the old honor had from
Christmas gone,
Or gone, or dwindled down to some
odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I,
tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the
pond,
Where, three times slipping from the
outer edge,
I bump'd the ice into three several
stars,
Fell in a doze; and half awake I
heard
The parson taking wide and wider
sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commis-
sioners,
Now hawking at Geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled
down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world, "at home was
little left,
And none abroad: there was no
anchor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt
his hand
On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold
by him."
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the
wassail-bowl."
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your
gift that way
At college: but another which you
had,

I mean of verse (for so we held it
then),
What came of that?" "You know,"
said Frank, "he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books" —
And then to me demanding why?
"Oh, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said,
or else
Something so said 'twas nothing —
that a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the
day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons:
ask.
It pleased me well enough." "Nay,
nay," said Hall,
"Why take the style of those heroic
times?
For nature brings not back the Mas-
todon,
Nor we those times; and why should
any man
Remodel models? these twelve books
of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-
worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better
burnt." "But I,"
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh
from this hearth
And have it: keep a thing, its use
will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a
horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd
my ears;
For I remember'd Everard's college
fame
When we were Freshmen: then at my
request
He brought it; and the poet little
urged,
But with some prelude of disparage-
ment,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes
and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle
 roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter
 sea;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by
 man,
 Had fallen in Lyonnese about their
 Lord,
 King Arthur: then, because his wound
 was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his
 knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the
 field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren
 land.
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on
 one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was
 full.
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir
 Bedivere:
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous
 knights
 Whereof this world holds record.
 Such a sleep
 They sleep — the men I loved. I
 think that we
 Shall nevermore, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly
 deeds,
 Walking about the gardens and the
 halls
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I
 made, —
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
 again
 To rule once more — but let what will
 be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
 That without help I cannot last till
 morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Ex-
 calibur,
 Which was my pride: for thou re-
 memberest how
 In those old days, one summer noon,
 Rose up from out the bosom of the
 lake,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
 derful,
 Holding the sword — and how I row'd
 across
 And took it, and have worn it like a
 king:
 And, wheresoever I am sung or
 told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known:
 But now delay not: take Excalibur,

And fling him far into the middle
 mere:
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly
 bring me word."
 To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-
 vere:
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave
 thee thus,
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
 helm.
 A little thing may harm a wounded
 man.
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at
 full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring
 thee word."
 So saying, from the ruin'd shrine
 he stept
 And in the moon athwart the place of
 tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of an-
 cient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-
 wind sang
 Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
 stepping down
 By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed
 rock,
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.
 There drew he forth the brand
 Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
 moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
 ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against
 the hilt:
 For all the haft twinkled with dia-
 mond sparks,
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
 work
 Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
 That both his eyes were dazzled, as
 he stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift
 mind,
 In act to throw: but at the last it
 seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many-knotted water-flags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the
 marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wounded
 King.
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir
 Bedivere:
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission
 which I gave?
 What is it thou hast seen? or what
 hast heard?"
 And answer made the bold Sir
 Bedivere:
 "I heard the ripple washing, in the
 reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the
 crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and
thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as be-
seem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either
hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to
lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go
again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the
thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring
me word."
Then went Sir Bedivere the second
time
Across the ridge, and paced beside
the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the
hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased,
he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
"And if indeed I cast the brand
away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy
note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the
earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes
of many men.
What good should follow this, if this
were done ?
What harm, undone ? deep harm to
disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey them, if a king
demand
An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The King is sick, and knows not what
he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty
breath
And rumors of a doubt ? but were
this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of
mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of
arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excali-
bur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the
Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in
the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the
aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honor and much fame
were lost."
So spake he, clouded with his own
conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the
wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily :
"What is it thou hast seen ? or what
hast heard ?"
And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere :
"I heard the water lapping on the
crag,
And the long ripple washing in the
reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur,
much in wrath :
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is
me !
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his
eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what
thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my
knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the
precious hilt ;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the
eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get
thee hence :
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my
hands."
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd
the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it.
The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of
the moon,
And flashing round and round, and
whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern
morn,
Seen where the moving isles of win-
ter shock
By night, with noises of the northern
sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an
arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,
And caught him by the hilt, and
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in
the mere.

And lightly went the other to the
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath:

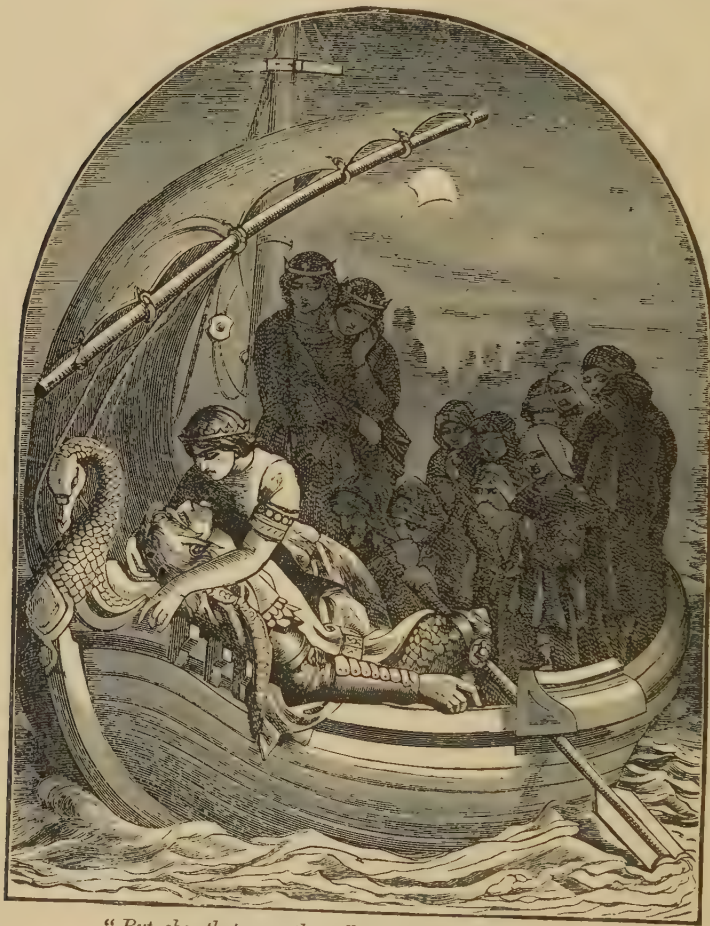
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is
done.

Speak out: what is it thou hast heard,
or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest
the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never
saw,



*"But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands."*

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I
die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal
men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him,
wheeling him;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,

That caught him by the hilt, and
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in
the mere."

And answer made King Arthur,
breathing hard:

"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I
were gone,
Make broad thy shoulders to receive
my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I
fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I
shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he
half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his
arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue
eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his
tears,
And would have spoken, but he found
not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on
one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-
guid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place
of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur
panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on
his bed
When all the house is mute. So
sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
"Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from
ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking,
as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a
cry
Before. His own thought drove him,
like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy
caves
And barren chasms, and all to left
and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round
him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that
rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels —
And on a sudden, lo! the level lakè,
And the long glories of the winter
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a
dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to
stern,
Beneath them; and descending they
were ware
That all the decks were dense with
stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a
dream — by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold —
and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling
stars,

And, as it were one voice an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that
shrills

All night in a waste land, where no
one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of
the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me
in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There
those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her
lap,

And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, com-
plaining loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his
brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the
springing east;

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops

Of onset; and the light and lustrous
curls —

That made his forehead like a rising
sun

High from the daïs-throne — were
parch'd with dust;

Or, clotted into points and hanging
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the
King;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-
ment,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedi-
vere,

"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall
I go?

Where shall I hide my forehead and
my eyes?

For now I see the true old times are
dead,

When every morning brought a noble
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble
knight.

Such times have been not since the
light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is
dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty
world;
And I, the last, go forth companion-
less,
And the days darken round me, and
the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from
the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding
place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many
ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in
me?
I have lived my life, and that which I
have done
May He within Himself make pure!
but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face
again,
Pray for my soul. More things are
wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Where-
fore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.
For what are men better than sheep
or goats
That nourish a blind life within the
brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands
of prayer
Both for themselves and those who
call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every
way
Bound by gold chains about the feet
of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long
way
With these thou seest—if indeed I
go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a
doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any
snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it
lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with
orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with
summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar
and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her
death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the
hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge
of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died
away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light,
that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,
flared and fell:
At which the Parson, sent to sleep
with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted
"Good!" but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which
he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here
and there
Redeem'd it from the charge of noth-
ingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized
his work;
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time
of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for
dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man
ill-used,
"There now—that's nothing!" drew
a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoul-
der'd log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the
flue:
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I
seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming
shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn,
when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of
day,
To me, methought, who waited with a
crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing for-
ward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentle-
man
Of stateliest port; and all the people
cried,
"Arthur is come again; he cannot
die."
Then those that stood upon the hills
behind
Repeated—"Come again, and thrice
as fair;"

And, further inland, voices echoed —
 "Come
 With all good things, and war shall
 be no more."
 At this a hundred bells began to
 peal,
 That with the sound I woke, and heard
 indeed
 The clear church-bells ring in the
 Christmas-morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER;

OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the
 day,
 When I and Eustace from the city
 went
 To see the Gardener's Daughter; I
 and he,
 Brothers in Art; a friendship so com-
 plete
 Portion'd in halves between us, that
 we grew
 The fable of the city where we dwelt.
 My Eustace might have sat for
 Hercules;
 So muscular he spread, so broad of
 breast.
 He, by some law that holds in love,
 and draws
 The greater to the lesser, long desired
 A certain miracle of symmetry,
 A miniature of loveliness, all grace
 Summ'd up and closed in little;—
 Juliet, she
 So light of foot, so light of spirit—
 oh, she
 To me myself, for some three careless
 moons,
 The summer pilot of an empty heart
 Unto the shores of nothing! Know
 you not
 Such touches are but embassies of
 love,
 To tamper with the feelings, ere he
 found
 Empire for life? but Eustace painted
 her,
 And said to me, she sitting with us
 then,
 "When will *you* paint like this?" and
 I replied,
 (My words were half in earnest, half
 in jest,)
 "'Tis not your work, but Love's.
 Love, unperceived,
 A more ideal Artist he than all,
 Came, drew your pencil from you,
 made those eyes
 Darker than darkest pansies, and that
 hair
 More black than ashbuds in the front
 of March."

And Juliet answer'd laughing, "Go
 and see
 The Gardener's daughter: trust me,
 after that,
 You scarce can fail to match his mas-
 terpiece."
 And up we rose, and on the spur we
 went.
 Not wholly in the busy world, nor
 quite
 Beyond it, blooms the garden that I
 love.
 News from the humming city comes
 to it
 In sound of funeral or of marriage
 bells;
 And, sitting muffled in dark leaves,
 you hear
 The windy clanging of the minster
 clock;
 Although between it and the garden
 lies
 A league of grass, wash'd by a slow
 broad stream,
 That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the
 oar,
 Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
 Barge-laden, to three arches of a
 bridge
 Crown'd with the minster-towers.
 The fields between
 Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-
 udder'd kine,
 And all about the large lime feathers
 low,
 The lime a summer home of murmur-
 ous wings.
 In that still place she, hoarded in
 herself,
 Grew, seldom seen; not less among us
 lived
 Her fame from lip to lip. Who had
 not heard
 Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter?
 Where was he,
 So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
 At such a distance from his youth in
 grief,
 That, having seen, forgot? The com-
 mon mouth,
 So gross to express delight, in praise
 of her
 Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
 And Beauty such a mistress of the
 world.
 And if I said that Fancy, led by
 Love,
 Would play with flying forms and
 images,
 Yet this is also true, that, long before
 I look'd upon her, when I heard her
 name
 My heart was like a prophet to my
 heart,
 And told me I should love. A crowd
 of hopes,

That sought to sow themselves like
winged seeds,
Born out of everything I heard and
saw,
Flutter'd about my senses and my
soul;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of
balm
To one that travels quickly, made the
air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of
thought,
That verged upon them, sweeter than
the dream
Dream'd by a happy man, when the
dark East,
Unseen, is brightening to his bridal
morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory
folds
For ever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery
squares,
Beneath a broad and equal-blowing
wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one
large cloud
Drew downward: but all else of
heaven was pure
Up to the Sun, and May from verge
to verge,
And May with me from head to heel.
And now,
As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it
were
The hour just flown, that morn with
all its sound,
(For those old Mays had thrice the
life of these.)
Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot
to graze,
And, where the hedge-row cuts the
pathway, stood,
Leaning his horns into the neighbor
field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the
woods
Came voices of the well-contented
doves.
The lark could scarce get out his notes
for joy,
But shook his song together as he
near'd
His happy home, the ground. To left
and right,
The cuckoo told his name to all the
hills;
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm;
The redcap whistled; and the night-
ingale
Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of
day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling
said to me,
"Hear how the bushes echo! by my
life,

These birds have joyful thoughts.
Think you they sing
Like poets, from the vanity of song?
Or have they any sense of why they
sing?

And would they praise the heavens
for what they have?"

And I made answer, "Were there
nothing else
For which to praise the heavens but
only love,
That only love were cause enough for
praise."

Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read
my thought,

And on we went; but ere an hour had
pass'd,

We reach'd a meadow slanting to the
North;

Down which a well-worn pathway
courted us

To one green wicket in a privet hedge;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy
walk

Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly
pruned;

And one warm gust, full-fed with per-
fume, blew

Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.
The garden stretches southward. In
the midst

A cedar spread his dark-green layers
of shade.

The garden-glasses shone, and mo-
mently

The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver
lights.

"Eustace," I said, "this wonder
keeps the house."

He nodded, but a moment afterwards
He cried, "Look! look!" Before he
ceased I turn'd,

And, ere a star can wink, beheld her
there.

For up the porch there grew an
Eastern rose,

That, flowering high, the last night's
gale had caught,

And blown across the walk. One arm
aloft—

Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to
the shape—

Holding the bush, to fix it back, she
stood,

A single stream of all her soft brown
hair

Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the
flowers

Stole all the golden gloss, and, wav-
ering

Lovingly lower, trembled on her
waist—

Ah, happy shade—and still went
waving down,

But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might
have danced

The greensward into greener circles,
 dipt,
 And mix'd with shadows of the com-
 mon ground!
 But the full day dwelt on her brows,
 and sunn'd

Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe
 bloom,
 And doubled his own warmth against
 her lips,
 And on the bounteous wave of such a
 breast



*"One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cull'd,
 Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips."*

As never pencil drew. Half light,
 half shade,
 She stood, a sight to make an old
 man young.
 So rapt, we near'd the house; but
 she, a Rose
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant
 toil,

Nor heard us come, nor from her tend-
 ance turn'd
 Into the world without; till close at
 hand,
 And almost ere I knew mine own in-
 tent,
 This murmur broke the stillness of
 that air

Which brooded round about her :

“ Ah, one rose,
One rose, but one, by those fair fingers
cull'd,
Were worth a hundred kisses press'd
on lips
Less exquisite than thine.”

She look'd : but all
Suffused with blushes — neither self-
possess'd
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood
and that,
Divided in a graceful quiet — paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and
turning, wound
Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd
her lips
For some sweet answer, tho' no answer
came,
Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And moved away, and left me, statue-
like,
In act to render thanks.

I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd
there
Till every daisy slept, and Love's
white star
Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in
the dusk.

So home we went, and all the live-
long way
With solemn gibe did Eustace banter
me.

“ Now,” said he, “ will you climb the
top of Art.
You cannot fail but work in hues to
dim

The Titianic Flora. Will you match
My Juliet? you, not you, — the Mas-
ter, Love,
A more ideal Artist he than all.”

So home I went, but could not sleep
for joy,
Reading her perfect features in the
gloom,

Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and
o'er,
And shaping faithful record of the
glance

That graced the giving — such a noise
of life

Swarm'd in the golden present, such
a voice

Call'd to me from the years to come,
and such

A length of bright horizon rimm'd the
dark.

And all that night I heard the watch-
man peal

The sliding season : all that night I
heard

The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy
hours.

The drowsy hours, dispensers of all
good,

O'er the mute city stole with folded
wings,

Distilling odors on me as they went
To greet their fairer sisters of the East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and
heir to all,

Made this night thus. Henceforward
squal nor storm

Could keep me from that Eden where
she dwelt.

Light pretends drew me ; sometimes a
Dutch love

For tulips ; then for roses, moss or
musk,

To grace my city rooms ; or fruits and
cream

Served in the weeping elm ; and more
and more

A word could bring the color to my
cheek ;

A thought would fill my eyes with
happy dew ;

Love trebled life within me, and with
each

The year increased.

The daughters of the year,
One after one, thro' that still garden
pass'd ;

Each garlanded with her peculiar
flower

Danced into light, and died into the
shade ;

And each in passing touch'd with some
new grace

Or seem'd to touch her, so that day
by day,

Like one that never can be wholly
known,

Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought
an hour

For Eustace, when I heard his deep
“ I will,”

Breathed, like the covenant of a God,
to hold

From thence thro' all the worlds : but
I rose up

Full of his bliss, and following her
dark eyes

Felt earth as air beneath me, till I
reach'd

The wicket-gate, and found her stand-
ing there.

There sat we down upon a garden
mound,

Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the
third,

Between us, in the circle of his arms
Enwound us both ; and over many a
range

Of waning lime the gray cathedral
towers,

Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
Reveal'd their shining windows : from
them clash'd

The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time
we play'd,

We spoke of other things ; we coursed
 about
 The subject most at heart, more near
 and near,
 Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling
 round
 The central wish, until we settled there.
 Then, in that time and place, I spoke
 to her,
 Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine
 own,
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to
 hear,
 Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I
 loved ;
 And in that time and place she an-
 swer'd me,
 And in the compass of three little
 words,
 More musical than ever came in one,
 The silver fragments of a broken
 voice,
 Made me most happy, faltering, " I am
 thine."
 Shall I cease here ? Is this enough
 to say
 That my desire, like all strongest
 hopes,
 By its own energy fulfill'd itself,
 Merged in completion ? Would you
 learn at full
 How passion rose thro' circumstantial
 grades
 Beyond all grades develop'd ? and in-
 deed
 I had not staid so long to tell you all,
 But while I mused came Memory with
 sad eyes,
 Holding the folded annals of my
 youth ;
 And while I mused, Love with knit
 brows went by,
 And with a flying finger swept my lips,
 And spake, " Be wise : not easily for-
 given
 Are those, who setting wide the doors
 that bar
 The secret bridal chambers of the
 heart,
 Let in the day." Here, then, my words
 have end.
 Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
 wells —
 Of that which came between, more
 sweet than each,
 In whispers, like the whispers of the
 leaves
 That tremble round a nightingale —
 in sighs
 Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for ut-
 terance,
 Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might
 I not tell
 Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
 given,

And vows, where there was never need
 of vows,
 And kisses, where the heart on one
 wild leap
 Hung tranced from all pulsation, as
 above
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces
 pale
 Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleet-
 ing stars ;
 Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-
 lit,
 Spread the light haze along the river-
 shores,
 And in the hollows ; or as once we met
 Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering
 rain
 Night slid down one long stream of
 sighing wind,
 And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.
 But this whole hour your eyes have
 been intent
 On that veil'd picture — veil'd, for
 what it holds
 May not be dwelt on by the common
 day.
 This prelude has prepared thee. Raise
 thy soul ;
 Make thine heart ready with thine
 eyes : the time
 Is come to raise the veil.
 Behold her there,
 As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,
 My first, last love ; the idol of my
 youth,
 The darling of my manhood, and, alas !
 Now the most blessed memory of mine
 age.

DORA.

With farmer Allan at the farm abode
 William and Dora. William was his
 son,
 And she his niece. He often look'd
 at them,
 And often thought, " I'll make them
 man and wife."
 Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
 And yearn'd towards William ; but the
 youth, because
 He had been always with her in the
 house,
 Thought not of Dora.
 Then there came a day
 When Allan call'd his son, and said,
 " My son :
 I married late, but I would wish to see
 My grandchild on my knees before I
 die :
 And I have set my heart upon a match.
 Now therefore look to Dora ; she is
 well
 To look to ; thrifty too beyond her age.
 She is my brother's daughter : he and I

Had once hard words, and parted, and
 he died
 In foreign lands; but for his sake I
 bred
 His daughter Dora: take her for your
 wife;
 For I have wish'd this marriage, night
 and day,
 For many years." But William an-
 swer'd short;
 "I cannot marry Dora; by my life,
 I will not marry Dora." Then the old
 man
 Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
 and said:
 "You will not, boy! you dare to an-
 swer thus!
 But in my time a father's word was
 law,
 And so it shall be now for me. Look
 to it;
 Consider, William: take a month to
 think,
 And let me have an answer to my
 wish;
 Or, by the Lord that made me, you
 shall pack,
 And never more darken my doors
 again."
 But William answer'd madly; bit his
 lips,
 And broke away. The more he look'd
 at her
 The less he liked her; and his ways
 were harsh;
 But Dora bore them meekly. Then
 before
 The month was out he left his father's
 house,
 And hired himself to work within the
 fields;
 And half in love, half spite, he woo'd
 and wed
 A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
 Then, when the bells were ringing,
 Allan call'd
 His niece and said: "My girl, I love
 you well;
 But if you speak with him that was
 my son,
 Or change a word with her he calls his
 wife,
 My home is none of yours. My will
 is law."
 And Dora promised, being meek. She
 thought,
 "It cannot be: my uncle's mind will
 change!"
 And days went on, and there was
 born a boy
 To William; then distresses came on
 him;
 And day by day he pass'd his father's
 gate,
 Heart-broken, and his father help'd
 him not.

But Dora stored what little she could
 save,
 And sent it them by stealth, nor did
 they know
 Who sent it; till at last a fever seized
 On William, and in harvest time he
 died.
 Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
 And look'd with tears upon her boy,
 and thought
 Hard things of Dora. Dora came and
 said:
 "I have obey'd my uncle until now,
 And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'
 me
 This evil came on William at the first.
 But, Mary, for the sake of him that's
 gone,
 And for your sake, the woman that he
 chose,
 And for this orphan, I am come to
 you:
 You know there has not been for these
 five years
 So full a harvest: let me take the
 boy,
 And I will set him in my uncle's eye
 Among the wheat; that when his heart
 is glad
 Of the full harvest, he may see the
 boy,
 And bless him for the sake of him
 that's gone."
 And Dora took the child, and went
 her way
 Across the wheat, and sat upon a
 mound
 That was unsown, where many poppies
 grew.
 Far off the farmer came into the field
 And spied her not; for none of all his
 men
 Dare tell him Dora waited with the
 child;
 And Dora would have risen and gone
 to him,
 But her heart fail'd her; and the reap-
 ers reap'd,
 And the sun fell, and all the land was
 dark.
 But when the morrow came, she rose
 and took
 The child once more, and sat upon the
 mound;
 And made a little wreath of all the
 flowers
 That grew about, and tied it round his
 hat
 To make him pleasing in her uncle's
 eye.
 Then when the farmer pass'd into the
 field
 He spied her, and he left his men at
 work,
 And came and said: "Where were you
 yesterday?"

“Whose child is that? What are you doing here?”

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground, And answer’d softly, “This is William’s child!”

“And did I not,” said Allan, “did I not

Forbid you, Dora?” Dora said again: “Do with me as you will, but take the child,

And bless him for the sake of him that’s gone!”

And Allan said, “I see it is a trick Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you! You knew my word was law, and yet you dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy;

But go you hence, and never see me more.”

So saying, he took the boy that cried aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell

At Dora’s feet. She bow’d upon her hands,

And the boy’s cry came to her from the field,

More and more distant. She bow’d down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,

And all the things that had been. She bow’d down

And wept in secret; and the reapers reap’d,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary’s house, and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy

Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise

To God, that help’d her in her widowhood.

And Dora said, “My uncle took the boy;

But, Mary, let me live and work with you:

He says that he will never see me more.”

Then answer’d Mary, “This shall never be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself:

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to slight

His mother; therefore thou and I will go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him home;

And I will beg of him to take thee back:

But if he will not take thee back again,

Then thou and I will live within one house,

And work for William’s child, until he grows

Of age to help us.”

So the women kiss’d Each other, and set out, and reach’d the farm.

The door was off the latch: they peep’d, and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire’s knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,

And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,

Like one that loved him: and the lad stretch’d out

And babbled for the golden seal, that hung

From Allan’s watch, and sparkled by the fire.

Then they came in: but when the boy beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her: And Allan set him down, and Mary said:

“O Father!—if you let me call you so—

I never came a-begging for myself, Or William, or this child; but now I come

For Dora: take her back; she loves you well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at peace

With all men; for I ask’d him, and he said,

He could not ever rue his marrying me—

I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he said

That he was wrong to cross his father thus:

‘God bless him!’ he said, ‘and may he never know

The troubles I have gone thro’!’ Then he turn’d

His face and pass’d—unhappy that I am!

But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you

Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight

His father’s memory; and take Dora back,

And let all this be as it was before.”

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face By Mary. There was silence in the room;

And all at once the old man burst in sobs:—

"I have been to blame — to blame.
 I have killed my son.
 I have kill'd him — but I loved him
 — my dear son.
 May God forgive me! — I have been
 to blame.
 Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about
 The old man's neck, and kiss'd him
 many times.
 And all the man was broken with re-
 morse;
 And all his love came back a hundred-
 fold;
 And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
 William's child
 Thinking of William.

So those four abode
 Within one house together; and as
 years
 Went forward, Mary took another
 mate;
 But Dora lived unmarried till her
 death.

AUDLEY COURT.

"THE Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd,
 and not a room
 For love or money. Let us picnic
 there
 At Audley Court."

I spoke, while Audley feast
 Humm'd like a hive all round the
 narrow quay,
 To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
 To Francis just alighted from the boat,
 And breathing of the sea. "With all
 my heart,"
 Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd
 thro' the swarm,
 And rounded by the stillness of the
 beach
 To where the bay runs up its latest
 horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly
 lipp'd
 The flat red granite; so by many a
 sweep
 Of meadow smooth from aftermath
 we reach'd
 The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd
 thro' all
 The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycam-
 ores,
 And cross'd the garden to the gar-
 dener's lodge,
 With all its casements bedded, and its
 walls
 And chimneys muffled in the leafy
 vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Fran-
 cis laid
 A damask napkin wrought with horse
 and hound,

Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt
 of home,
 And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-
 made,
 Where quail and pigeon, lark and lev-
 eret lay,
 Like fossils of the rock, with golden
 yolks
 Imbedded and injellied; last, with
 these,
 A flask of cider from his father's
 vats,
 Prime, which I knew; and so we sat
 and eat
 And talk'd old matters over; who was
 dead,
 Who married, who was like to be, and
 how
 The races went, and who would rent
 the hall:
 Then touch'd upon the game, how
 scarce it was
 This season; glancing thence, dis-
 cuss'd the farm,
 The four-field system, and the price of
 grain;
 And struck upon the corn-laws, where
 we split,

And came again together on the king
 With heated faces; till he laugh'd
 aloud;
 And, while the blackbird on the pippin
 hung
 To hear him, clapt his hand in mine
 and sang—

"Oh! who would fight and march
 and countermarch,
 Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
 And shovell'd up into some bloody
 trench
 Where no one knows? but let me live
 my life.

"Oh! who would cast and balance
 at a desk,
 Perch'd like a crow upon a three-
 legg'd stool,
 Till all his juice is dried, and all his
 joints
 Are full of chalk? but let me live my
 life.

"Who'd serve the state? for if I
 carved my name
 Upon the cliffs that guard my native
 land,
 I might as well have traced it in the
 sands;
 The sea wastes all: but let me live my
 life.

"Oh! who would love? I woo'd a
 woman once,
 But she was sharper than an eastern
 wind,
 And all my heart turn'd from her, as
 a thorn
 Turns from the sea; but let me live
 my life."

He sang his song, and I replied with mine:
 I found it in a volume, all of songs,
 Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,
 His books—the more the pity, so I said—
 Came to the hammer here in March—and this—
 I set the words, and added names I knew.
 "Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:
 Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
 And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.
 "Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
 Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
 For thou art fairer than all else that is.
 "Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:
 Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:
 I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.
 "I go, but I return: I would I were
 The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
 Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me."
 So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
 The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,
 My friend; and I, that having wherewithal,
 And in the fallow leisure of my life
 A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
 Did what I would; but ere the night we rose
 And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that, just
 In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
 Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
 The limit of the hills; and as we sank
 From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,
 The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down
 The bay was oily calm; the harbor buoy,
 Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
 With one green sparkle ever and anon
 Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'M glad I walk'd. How fresh
 the meadows look
 Above the river, and, but a month
 ago,

The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.
 Is yon plantation where this byway joins
 The turnpike?
 James. Yes.
 John. And when does this come by?
 James. The mail? At one o'clock.
 John. What is it now?
 James. A quarter to.
 John. Whose house is that I see?
 No, not the County Member's with the vane:
 Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and half
 A score of gables.
 James. That? Sir Edward Head's:
 But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.
 John. Oh, his. He was not broken.
 James. No, sir, he,
 Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood
 That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid his face
 From all men, and commercing with himself,
 He lost the sense that handles daily life—
 That keeps us all in order more or less—
 And sick of home went overseas for change.
 John. And whither?
 James. Nay, who knows? he's here and there.
 But let him go; his devil goes with him,
 As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.
 John. What's that?
 James. You saw the man—on Monday, was it?—
 There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up
 And bristles; half has fall'n and made a bridge;
 And there he caught the younker tickling trout—
 Caught *in flagrante*—what's the Latin word?—
Delicto: but his house, for so they say,
 Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook
 The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at doors,
 And rummaged like a rat: no servant stay'd:
 The farmer vext packs up his beds and chairs,
 And all his household stuff; and with his boy
 Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,

Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him, "What!

You're flitting!" "Yes, we're flitting," says the ghost

(For they had pack'd the thing among the beds,)

"Oh well," says he, "you flitting with us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again."

John. He left his wife behind; for so I heard.

James. He left her, yes. I met my lady once:

A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.

John. Oh yet but I remember, ten years back—

"Tis now at least ten years—and then she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter thing:

A body slight and round, and like a pear

In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot

Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin

As clean and white as privet when it flowers.

James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager, Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame and pride,

New things and old, himself and her, she sour'd

To what she is: a nature never kind!

Like men, like manners: like breeds like, they say:

Kind nature is the best: those manners next

That fit us like a nature second-hand; Which are indeed the manners of the great.

John. But I had heard it was this bill that past,

And fear of change at home, that drove him hence.

James. That was the last drop in the cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff brought

A Chartist pike. You should have seen him wince

As from a venomous thing: he thought himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry

Should break his sleep by night, and his nice eyes

Should see the raw mechanic's bloody thumbs

Sweat on his blazon'd chairs; but, sir, you know

That these two parties still divide the world—

Of those that want, and those that have: and still

The same old sore breaks out from age to age

With much the same result. Now I myself,

A Tory to the quick, was as a boy Destructive, when I had not what I would.

I was at school—a college in the South:

There lived a flayflint near; we stole his fruit,

His hens, his eggs; but there was law for us;

We paid in person. He had a sow, sir. She,

With meditative grunts of much content,

Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the college tower

From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew stair

With hand and rope we haled the groaning sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she pigg'd.

Large range of prospect had the mother sow,

And but for daily loss of one she loved As one by one we took them—but for this—

As never sow was higher in this world—

Might have been happy: but what lot is pure?

We took them all, till she was left alone

Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine, And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

John. They found you out?

James. Not they.

John. Well—after all—

What know we of the secret of a man?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us, who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool the world,

Which charts us all in its coarse blacks or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm, As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows

To Pity—more from ignorance than will.

But put your best foot forward, or I fear

That we shall miss the mail: and here it comes

With five at top: as quaint a four-in-hand
As you shall see — three pyebalds and a roan.

EDWIN MORRIS;

OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters
of a year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a rock
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, millionaires,
Here lived the Hills — a Tudor-chim-nied bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.
O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
With Edwin Morris and with Edward Bull
The curate; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the names,
Long learned names of agaric, moss and fern,
Who forged a thousand theories of the rocks,
Who taught me how to skate, to row, to swim,
Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
His own — I call'd him Crichton, for he seem'd
All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early life,
And his first passion; and he answer'd me;
And well his words became him: was he not
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he spoke.

"My love for Nature is as old as I;
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,
And three rich sennights more, my love for her.
My love for Nature and my love for her,

Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.
To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and change
With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between;
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it sweet
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to breathe."

Or this or something like to this he spoke.
Then said the fat-faced curate Edward Bull,
"I take it, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world.
A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a dame indoors, that trims us up,
And keeps us tight; but these unreal ways
Seem but the theme of writers, and indeed
Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid stuff.
I say, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world."

"Parson," said I, "you pitch the pipe too low:
But I have sudden touches, and can run
My faith beyond my practice into his:
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce have other music: yet say on.
What should one give to light on such a dream?"
I ask'd him half-sardonically. "Give?
Give all thou art," he answer'd, and a light
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek;
"I would have hid her needle in my heart,
To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin: my ears could hear
Her lightest breath; her least remark was worth
The experience of the wise. I went and came;
Her voice fled always thro' the summer land:

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy
days!
The flower of each, those moments
when we met,
The crown of all, we met to part no
more."

Were not his words delicious, I a
beast
To take them as I did? but something
jarr'd;
Whether he spoke too largely; that
there seem'd
A touch of something false, some self-
conceit,
Or over-smoothness: howsoe'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humor, and I said:

"Friend Edwin, do not think your-
self alone
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to
me,
As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right
and left?
But you can talk: yours is a kindly
vein:
I have, I think, — Heaven knows — as
much within;
Have, or should have, but for a
thought or two,
That like a purple beech among the
greens
Looks out of place: 'tis from no want
in her:
It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern
mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me
right."

So spoke I knowing not the things
that were.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward
Bull:
"God made the woman for the use of
man,
And for the good and increase of the
world."
And I and Edwin laughed; and now
we paused
About the windings of the marge to
hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy
holms
And alders, garden-isles; and now we
left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lipping lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the
sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on
their crags,
My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by
him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.
'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no
more:

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous*
suit,

The close, "Your Letty, only yours";
and this

Thrice underscored. The friendly
mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over,
ran

My craft aground, and heard with
beating heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelv-
ing keel;

And out I stept, and up I crept: she
moved,

Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering
flowers:

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice;
and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore
faith, I breathed

In some new planet: a silent cousin
stole

Upon us and departed: "Leave," she
cried,

"O leave me!" "Never, dearest,
never: here

I brave the worst:" and while we
stood like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of
pugs

And poodles yell'd within, and out
they came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles.
"What, with him!

Go" (shrill'd the cotton-spinning
chorus); "him!"

I choked. Again they shriek'd the
burthen — "Him!"

Again with hands of wild rejection
"Go! —

Girl, get you in!" She went — and in
one month

They wedded her to sixty thousand
pounds,

To lands in Kent and messuages in
York,

And slight Sir Robert with his watery
smile

And educated whisker. But for me,
They set an ancient creditor to

work:
It seems I broke a close with force

and arms:
There came a mystic token from the

king
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!

I read, and fled by night, and flying
turn'd:

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake be-
low:

I turn'd once more, close-button'd to
the storm;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have
seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared
to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet
long ago
I have pardon'd little Letty; not in-
deed,
It may be, for her own dear sake but
this,
She seems a part of those fresh days
to me;
For in the dust and drouth of Lon-
don life
She moves among my visions of the
lake,
While the prime swallow dips his
wing, or then
While the gold-lily blows, and over-
head
The light cloud smoulders on the
summer crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and
crust of sin,
Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven,
scarce meet
For troops of devils, mad with blas-
phemy,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I
hold
Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn
and sob,
Battering the gates of heaven with
storms of prayer,
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my
sin.

Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty
God,
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten
years,
Thrice multiplied by superhuman
pangs,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and
cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous
throes and cramps,
A sign betwixt the meadow and the
cloud,
Patient on this, tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp,
and sleet, and snow;
And I had hoped that ere this period
closed
Thou wouldst have caught me up into
thy rest,
Denying not these weather-beaten
limbs
The meed of saints, the white robe
and the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord: I do not
breathe,
Not whisper, any murmur of com-
plaint.
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this,
were still
Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to
bear,
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,
that crush'd
My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,
Thou knowest I bore this better at
the first,
For I was strong and hale of body
then;
And tho' my teeth, which now are
dropt away,
Would chatter with the cold, and all
my beard
Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the
moon,
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl
with sound
Of pious hymns and psalms, and
sometimes saw
An angel stand and watch me, as I
sang.

Now am I feeble grown; my end
draws nigh;
I hope my end draws nigh: half deaf
I am,
So that I scarce can hear the people
hum
About the column's base, and almost
blind,
And scarce can recognize the fields I
know;
And both my thighs are rotted with
the dew;
Yet cease I not to clamor and to
cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my
weary head,
Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from
the stone,
Have mercy, mercy: take away my
sin.

O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my
soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be
saved?
Who may be made a saint, if I fail
here?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more
than I.
For did not all thy martyrs die one
death?
For either they were stoned, or cruci-
fied,
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or
sawn
In twain beneath the ribs; but I die
here
To-day, and whole years long, a life
of death.

Bear witness, if I could have found a way
 (And heedfully I sifted all my thought)
 More slowly-painful to subdue this home
 Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,
 I had not stinted practice, O my God.
 For not alone this pillar-punishment,
 Not this alone I bore: but while I lived
 In the white convent down the valley there,
 For many weeks about my loins I wore
 The robe that haled the buckets from the well,
 Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;
 And spake not of it to a single soul,
 Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,
 Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
 My brethren marvell'd greatly. More than this
 I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.
 Three winters, that my soul might grow to thee,
 I lived up there on yonder mountain side.
 My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay
 Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;
 Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist, and twice
 Black'd with thy branding thunder, and sometimes
 Sucking the damps for drink, and eating not,
 Except the spare chance-gift of those that came
 To touch my body and be heal'd, and live:
 And they say then that I work'd miracles,
 Whereof my fame is loud amongst mankind,
 Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou, O God,
 Knowest alone whether this was or no.
 Have mercy, mercy! cover all my sin.
 Then, that I might be more alone with thee,
 Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
 Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve;
 And twice three years I crouch'd on one that rose
 Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew
 Twice ten long weary weary years to this,

That numbers forty cubits from the soil.

I think that I have borne as much as this —
 Or else I dream — and for so long a time,
 If I may measure time by yon slow light,
 And this high dial, which my sorrow crowns —
 So much — even so.

And yet I know not well,
 For that the evil ones come here, and say,
 "Fall down, O Simeon: that hast suffer'd long
 For ages and for ages!" then they prate
 Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
 Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,
 Maybe for months, in such blind lethargies
 That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are choked.

But yet
 Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all the saints
 Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on earth
 House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
 Sit with their wives by fires, eat wholesome food,
 And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls,
 I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light,
 Bow down one thousand and two hundred times,
 To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the saints;
 Or in the night, after a little sleep,
 I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am wet
 With drenching dews, or stiff with crackling frost.
 I wear an undress'd goatskin on my back;
 A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
 And in my weak, lean arms I lift the cross,
 And strive and wrestle with thee till I die:
 O mercy, mercy! wash away my sin.
 O Lord, thou knowest what a man I am;
 A sinful man, conceived and born in sin:
 'Tis their own doing; this is none of mine;
 Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for this,
 That here come those that worship me? Ha! ha!

They think that I am somewhat.
What am I?

The silly people take me for a saint,
And bring me offerings of fruit and
flowers:

And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness
here)

Have all in all endured as much, and
more

Than many just and holy men, whose
names

Are register'd and calendar'd for
saints.

Good people, you do ill to kneel to
me.

What is it I can have done to merit
this?

I am a sinner viler than you all.

It may be I have wrought some mira-
cles,

And cured some halt and maim'd; but
what of that?

It may be, no one, even among the
saints,

May match his pains with mine; but
what of that?

Yet do not rise; for you may look on
me,

And in your looking you may kneel
to God.

Speak! is there any of you halt or
maim'd?

I think you know I have some power
with Heaven

From my long penance: let him speak
his wish.

Yes, I can heal him. Power goes
forth from me.

They say that they are heal'd. Ah,
hark! they shout

"St. Simeon Stylites." Why, if so,
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
Can I work miracles and not be saved?
This is not told of any. They were
saints.

It cannot be but that I shall be saved;
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,
"Behold a saint!"

And lower voices saint me from above.
Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysa-
lis

Cracks into shining wings, and hope
ere death

Spreads more and more and more, that
God hath now

Sponged and made blank of crimeful
record all

My mortal archives.

O my sons, my sons,

I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
The watcher on the column till the
end;

I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
bakes;

I, whose bald brows in silent hours
become

Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
From my high nest of penance here
proclaim

That Pontius and Iscariot by my side
Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals

I lay,

A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath
Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd
my sleeve,

Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at
me.

I smote them with the cross; they
swarm'd again.

In bed like monstrous apes they
crush'd my chest:

They flapp'd my light out as I read: I
saw

Their faces grow between me and my
book;

With colt-like whinny and with hog-
gish whine

They burst my prayer. Yet this way
was left,

And by this way I 'scaped them.
Mortify

Your flesh, like me, with scourges
and with thorns;

Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it
may be, fast

Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly,
with slow steps,

With slow, faint steps, and much
exceeding pain,

Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
that still

Sing in mine ears. But yield not me
the praise:

God only through his bounty hath
thought fit,

Among the powers and princes of this
world,

To make me an example to mankind,
Which few can reach to. Yet I do
not say

But that a time may come — yea, even
now,

Now, now, his footsteps smite the
threshold stairs

Of life — I say, that time is at the doors
When you may worship me without

reproach;

For I will leave my relics in your land,
And you may carve a shrine about

my dust,

And burn a fragrant lamp before my
bones,

When I am gather'd to the glorious
saints.

While I spake then, a sting of
shrewdest pain

Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-
like change,

In passing, with a grosser film made
thick

These heavy, horny eyes. The end!
 the end!
 Surely the end! What's here? a
 shape, a shade,
 A flash of light. Is that the angel
 there
 That holds a crown? Come, blessed
 brother, come.
 I know thy glittering face. I waited
 long;
 My brows are ready. What! deny it
 now?
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I
 clutch it. Christ!
 'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown!
 the crown!
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
 Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm,
 and frankincense.
 Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints:
 I trust
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet
 for Heaven.
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man
 of God,
 Among you there, and let him pres-
 ently
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the
 shaft,
 And climbing up into my airy home,
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament;
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
 A quarter before twelve.
 But thou, O Lord,
 Aid all this foolish people; let them
 take
 Example, pattern: lead them to thy
 light.

THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls;
 Once more before my face
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
 That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
 Beneath its drift of smoke;
 And ah! with what delighted eyes
 I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
 Ere that, which in me burn'd,
 The love, that makes me thrice a man,
 Could hope itself return'd;

To yonder oak within the field
 I spoke without restraint,
 And with a larger faith appeal'd
 Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
 And told him of my choice,

Until he plagiarized a heart,
 And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd under Heaven
 None else could understand;
 I found him garrulously given,
 A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
 Is many a weary hour;
 'Twere well to question him, and try
 If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
 Broad Oak of Summer-chace,
 Whose topmost branches can discern
 The roofs of Sumner-place!

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
 If ever maid or spouse,
 As fair as my Olivia, came
 To rest beneath thy boughs. —

"O Walter, I have shelter'd here
 Whatever maiden grace
 The good old Summers, year by year
 Made ripe in Sumner-chace:

"Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
 And, issuing shorn and sleek,
 Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
 The girls upon the cheek,

"Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
 And number'd bead, and shrift,
 Bluff Harry broke into the spence
 And turn'd the cowls adrift:

"And I have seen some score of those
 Fresh faces, that would thrive
 When his man-minded offset rose
 To chase the deer at five;

"And all that from the town would
 stroll,
 Till that wild wind made work
 In which the gloomy brewer's soul
 Went by me, like a stork:

"The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
 And others, passing praise,
 Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
 For puritanic stays:

"And I have shadow'd many a group
 Of beauties, that were born
 In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
 Or while the patch was worn;

"And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
 About me leap'd and laugh'd
 The modish Cupid of the day,
 And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

"I swear (and else may insects prick
 Each leaf into a gall)

This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all;

But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

"For those and theirs, by Nature's
law
Have faded long ago;

"From when she gamboll'd on the
greens
A baby-germ, to when



*"I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace."*

The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years —

"Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass

So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :

"For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh."

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace ;

And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft has heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

"O yesterday, you know, the fair
Was holden at the town;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

"And with him Albert came on his.
I look'd at him with joy:
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.

"An hour had past—and, sitting
straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

"But as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

"She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf;
She left the new piano shut:
She could not please herself.

"Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.

"A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child:

"But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and
rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

"And here she came, and round me
play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my 'giant bole';

"And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist:
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

"I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.

"Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as
sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold."

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Sumner-chace!
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place!

But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came
To rest beneath thy boughs?

"O yes, she wander'd round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss'd the name she
found,
And sweetly murmur'd thine.

"A teardrop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse,
But I believe she wept.

"Then flush'd her cheek with rosy
light,
She glanced across the plain;
But not a creature was in sight:
She kiss'd me once again.

"Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd:

"And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

"Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may
press
The maiden's tender palm.

"I, rooted here among the groves,
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust:

"For ah! my friend, the days were
brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the
leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

"But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

"She had not found me so remiss;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto."

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

"'Tis little more: the day was warm;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm
And at my feet she lay.

"Her eyelids dropp'd their silken
eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

"I took the swarming sound of life —
The music from the town —
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.

"Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly;

"A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine,

"Then close and dark my arms I
spread,
And shadow'd all her rest —
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

"But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

"And yet it was a graceful gift —
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

"I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass.
O kiss him once for me.

"O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this."

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro' the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To ripen life may magnetize
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
That art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery-top
All throats that gurgle sweet!
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet!

All grass of silky feather grow —
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee
blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes!
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes!

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep!

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may
fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke;
And more than England honors that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly
close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and
breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if he had not been?
Not so. Shall Error in the round
of time
Still father Truth? O shall the brag-
gart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom
work itself
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to
law
System and empire? Sin itself be
found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the
Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, be-
come
Mere highway dust? or year by year
alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of
himself?
If this were thus, if this, indeed,
were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony
heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sap-
less days,
The long mechanic paces to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy
love?
O three times less unworthy! likewise
thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than
thy years
The Sun will run his orbit, and the
Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself
will bring
The drooping flower of knowledge
changed to fruit
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large
in Time,
And that which shapes it to some per-
fect end.
Will some one say, Then why not ill
for good?
Why took ye not your pastime? To
that man
My work shall answer, since I knew
the right
And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a
man.
— So let me think 'tis well for thee
and me —

Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my
heart so slow
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to
me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half
tears would dwell
One earnest, earnest moment upon
mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low
voice,
Faltering, would break its syllables, to
keep
My own full-tuned, — hold passion in
a leash,
And not leap forth and fall about thy
neck,
And on thy bosom (deep desired
relief!)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
weigh'd
Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!
For Love himself took part against
himself
To warn us off, and Duty loved of
Love —
O this world's curse, — beloved but
hated — came
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace
and mine,
And crying, "Who is this? behold
thy bride,"
She push'd me from thee.
If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these —
No, not to thee, but to thyself in
me:
Hard is my doom and thine: thou
knowest it all.
Could Love part thus? was it not
well to speak,
To have spoken once? It could not
but be well.
The slow sweet hours that bring us all
things good,
The slow sad hours that bring us all
things ill,
And all good things from evil, brought
the night
In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the
heart,
Gave utterance by the yearning of an
eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such
tears
As flow but once a life.
The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred
times
In that last kiss, which never was the
last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived
and died.
Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and
the words

That make a man feel strong in speaking truth;
 Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
 The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd
 In that brief night; the summer night, that paused
 Among her stars to hear us; stars that hung
 Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of Time
 Spun round in station, but the end had come.

O then like those, who clench their nerves to rush
 Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
 There—closing like an individual life—
 In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
 Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
 Caught up the whole of love and utter'd it,
 And bade adieu for ever.

Live—yet live—
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing all
 Life needs for life is possible to will—
 Live happy; tend thy flowers; be tended by
 My blessing! Should my Shadow cross thy thoughts
 Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
 For calmer hours to Memory's darkest hold,
 If not to be forgotten—not at once—
 Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy dreams,
 O might it come like one that looks content,
 With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
 And point thee forward to a distant light,
 Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
 And leave thee freer, till thou wake refresh'd
 Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
 Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow of pearl
 Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
 Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which Leonard wrote:
 It was last summer on a tour in Wales:

Old James was with me: we that day had been
 Up Snowdon; and I wish'd for Leonard there,
 And found him in Llanberis: then we crost
 Between the lakes, and clamber'd half way up
 The counter side; and that same song of his
 He told me; for I banter'd him, and swore
 They said he lived shut up within himself,
 A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
 That, setting the *how much* before the *how*,
 Cry, like the daughters of the horse-leech, "Give,
 Cram us with all," but count not me the herd!

To which "They call me what they will," he said:
 "But I was born too late: the fair new forms,
 That float about the threshold of an age,
 Like truths of Science waiting to be caught—
 Catch me who can, and make the catcher crown'd—
 Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.
 But if you care indeed to listen, hear
 These measured words, my work of yestermorn.

"We sleep and wake and sleep, but all things move;
 The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun;
 The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her ellipse;
 And human things returning on themselves
 Move onward, leading up the golden year.

"Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought can bud,
 Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
 Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
 And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

"When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,
 But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,
 And light shall spread, and man be liker man
 Thro' all the season of the golden year.

"Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens
be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of
that?"

The wonder of the eagle were the
less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden
year.

"Fly, happy happy sails, and bear
the Press;
Fly happy with the mission of the
Cross;

Knit land to land, and blowing haven-
ward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear
of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

"But we grow old. Ah! when shall
all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal
Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the
sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden
year?"

Thus far he flow'd, and ended;
whereupon

"Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence an-
swer'd James —

"Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's
time,

'Tis like the second world to us that
live;

'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on
Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year."

With that he struck his staff against
the rocks

And broke it, — James, — you know
him, — old, but full

Of force and choler, and firm upon his
feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter
woods,

O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis:
Then added, all in heat:

"What stuff is this!
Old writers push'd the happy season
back, —

The more fools they, — we forward:
dreamers both:

You most, that in an age, when every
hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the
death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seeds-
man, rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not
plunge

His hand into the bag: but well I
know

That unto him who works, and feels
he works,

This same grand year is ever at the
doors."

He spoke; and, high above, I heard
them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great
echo flap

And buffet round the hills, from bluff
to bluff.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,

By this still hearth, among these bar-
ren crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and
dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,

That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and
know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have en-
joy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both
with those

That loved me, and alone; on shore,
and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry
heart

Much have I seen and known; cities
of men

And manners, climates, councils, gov-
ernments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them
all;

And drunk delight of battle with my
peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy
Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch where-
thro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose
margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an
end,

To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in
use!

As tho' to breathe were life. Life
piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something
more,

A bringer of new things; and vile it
were

For some three suns to store and hoard
myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking
star,

Beyond the utmost bound of human
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.

Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work,
I mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs
her sail:



*"There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas."*

There gloom the dark broad seas. My
mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought,
and thought with me —
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and
opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads — you and
I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere
the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be
done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with
Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the
rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon
climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices.
Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order
smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the
baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us
down:

It may be we shall touch the Happy
Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we
knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and
tho'
We are not now that strength which
in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which
we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but
strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
yield.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay
and fall,
The vapors weep their burthen to the
ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,
And after many a summer dies the
swan.
Me only cruel immortality
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine
arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls
of morn.

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a
man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy
choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd
To his great heart none other than a
God!
I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant mine asking
with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how
they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant
work'd their wills,
And beat me down and marr'd and
wasted me,
And tho' they could not end me, left
me maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal
youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy
love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even
now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy
guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that
fill with tears

To hear me? Let me go: take back
thy gift:
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most
meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart;
there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where
I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glim-
mer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart re-
new'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close
to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the
wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy
yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of
fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beauti-
ful
In silence, then before thine answer
given
Departest, and thy tears are on my
cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with
thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying
learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
true?

"The Gods themselves cannot recall
their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another
heart
In days far-off, and with what other
eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that
watch'd—
The lucid outline forming round thee;
saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
Changed with thy mystic change, and
felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crim-
son'd all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I
lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing
dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-open-
ing buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that
kiss'd
Whispering I knew not what of wild
and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo
sing,
While Ilion like a mist rose into
towers.
Yet hold me not for ever in thine
East:
How can my nature longer mix with
thine?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my
wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds,
when the steam

Floats up from those dim fields about
the homes
Of happy men that have the power
to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier
dead.
Release me, and restore me to the
ground;
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
grave:
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
morn;
I earth in earth forget these empty
courts,
And thee returning on thy silver
wheels.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be. —

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd — her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs —
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong";
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? — having known me — to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand —
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster! — Hadst thou less unworthy
proved —
Would to God — for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No — she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears ;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings — she herself was not
exempt —
Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish in thy self-contempt !

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy ! wherefore should I care ?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness ? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from thy deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age !

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life ;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn ;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men :

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new :
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do :

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be ;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales ;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm ;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain —
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ; —
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree —
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing
space ;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime ?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;
I hung with grooms and porters on the
bridge,
To watch the three tall spires ; and there
I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this : —
Not only we, the latest seed of Time,*

New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that
prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,
And loathed to see them over-tax'd ;
but she
Did more, and underwent, and over-
came,

The woman of a thousand summers
back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who
ruled

In Coventry : for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers
brought

Their children, clamoring, "If we pay,
we starve!"

She sought her lord, and found him,
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his
hair

A yard behind. She told him of their
tears,

And pray'd him, "If they pay this tax,
they starve."

Whereat he stared, replying, half-
amazed,

"You would not let your little finger
ache

For such as *these*?" — "But I would
die," said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
Paul :

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her
ear;

"Oh ay, ay, ay, you talk!" — "Alas!"
she said,

"But prove me what it is I would not
do."

And from a heart as rough as Esau's
hand,

He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro'
the town,

And I repeat it"; and nodding, as in
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among
his dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her
mind,

As winds from all the compass shift
and blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,

And bade him cry, with sound of
trumpet, all

The hard condition; but that she
would loose

The people : therefore, as they loved
her well,

From then till noon no foot should
pace the street,

No eye look down, she passing; but
that all

Should keep within, door shut, and
window barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower,
and there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her
belt,

The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a
breath

She linger'd, looking like a summer
moon

Half-dipt in cloud: anon she shook
her head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to
her knee;

Unclad herself in haste; adown the
stair

Stole on; and, like a creeping sun-
beam, slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she
reach'd

The gateway; there she found her
palfrey trapt

In purple blazon'd with armorial
gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with
chastity :

The deep air listen'd round her as she
rode,

And all the low wind hardly breathed
for fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon
the spout

Had cunning eyes to see : the barking
cur

Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's
footfall shot

Like horrors thro' her pulses: the
blind walls

Were full of chinks and holes; and
overhead

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared :
but she

Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she
saw

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from
the field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with
chastity :

And one low churl, compact of thank-
less earth,

The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,

Peep'd — but his eyes, before they had
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his
head,

And dropt before him. So the Powers,
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-
used;

And she, that knew not, pass'd: and
all at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound,
the shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a
hundred towers,

One after one: but even then she
gain'd

Her bower; whence reissuing, robed
and crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax
away

And built herself an everlasting
name.

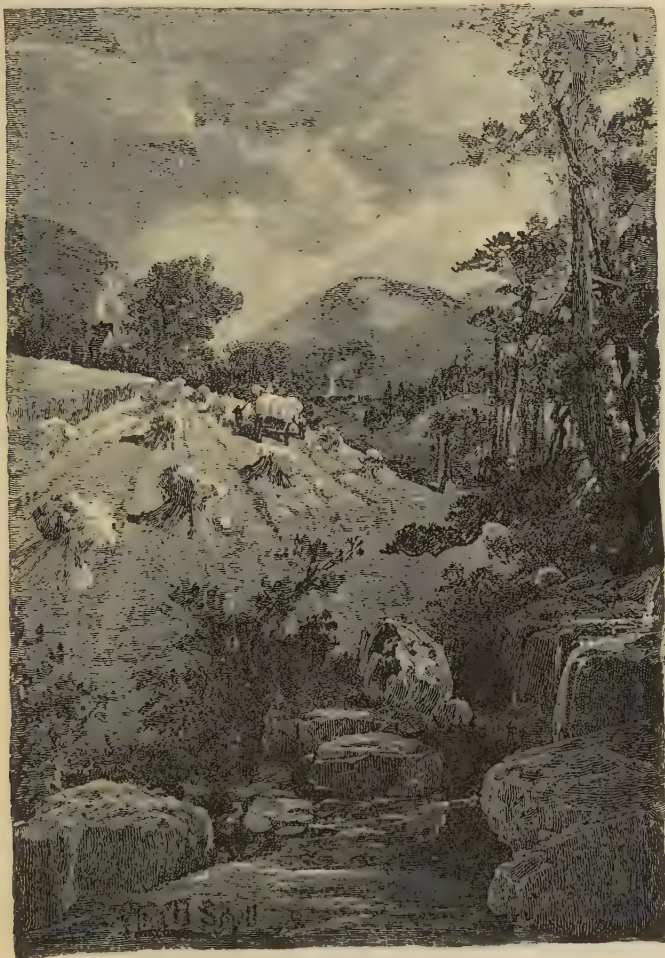
THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :

A pleasant hour has passed away
While, dreaming on, your damask
cheek,

The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming — and, behind,
A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,



*"The varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains."*

The reflex of a legend past,
And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I
had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
Nor look with that too-earnest
eye —

The rhymes are dazzled from their
place,
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy
plains,

Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins.
 Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows
 come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
 The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
 Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their
 eggs:
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.
 The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
 Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
 Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the
 wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd; and
 there
 The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honor blooming fair;
 The page has caught her hand in his:
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak:
 His own are pouted to a kiss:
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble
 wine.
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
 His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood;
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as
 blood;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, burr and brake and
 brier,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of
 men?
 Here all things in their place remain,
 As all were order'd, ages since.
 Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and
 Pain,
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
 She lying on her couch alone,
 Across the purple coverlet,
 The maiden's jet-black hair has
 grown,
 On either side her tranced form
 Forth streaming from a braid of
 pearl:
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
 Languidly ever; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward
 roll'd,
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond
 bright:
 Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with
 light.

III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not
 heard
 In palace chambers far apart.
 The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
 That lie upon her charmed heart.
 She sleeps: on either hand upswells
 The gold-fringed pillow lightly
 prest:
 She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
 A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
 To those that seek them issue forth;
 For love in sequel works with fate,
 And draws the veil from hidden
 worth.
 He travels far from other skies —
 His mantle glitters on the rocks —
 A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
 And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead:
"They perish'd in their daring
deeds."
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
"The many fail: the one succeeds."

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he
seeks:
He breaks the hedge: he enters
there:
The color flies into his cheeks:
He trusts to light on something fair;
For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps
wind:
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart.
The spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops—to kiss her—on his
knee.
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must
be!"

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,

And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And barking dogs, and crowing
cocks;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

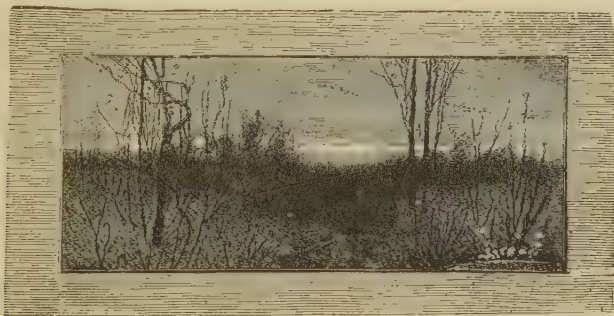
The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward
scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock
squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and
clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and
spoke,
"By holy rood, a royal beard!
How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap."
The barons swore, with many words,
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

"Pardy," return'd the king, "but still
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mention'd half an hour ago?"
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return'd reply:
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.



*"Across the hills, and far away
Beyond this utmost purple rim."*

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,

And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old:
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond this utmost purple rim,

And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss ;"
"O wake for ever, love," she hears,
"O love, 'twas such as this and this."
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"
"O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"
"O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !"

"O love, thy kiss would wake the
dead !"

And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapor buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

"A hundred summers ! can it be ?
And whither goest thou, tell me
where ?"

"O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders
there."

And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.



*"And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark."*

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wildweed flower that simply
blows ?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose ?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humors lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random
string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well — were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men ;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep
again ;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers ;
Titanic forces taking birth

In divers seasons, divers climes;
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decades new and strange,
Or gay quinquennials would we reap
The flower and quintessence of
change.

III.

Ah, yet would I — and would I might
So much your eyes my fancy take —
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake!
For, am I right, or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not
care;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there.
And, am I right or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd
hopes,
What lips, like thine, so sweetly
join'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fulness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see:
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may
give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
"What wonder, if he thinks me
fair?"
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
light?

Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —
But take it — earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree,
And waster than a warren:
Yet say the neighbors when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion!
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber!

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle, buzz! she went
With all her bees behind her:
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shod alder from the wave,
Came yews, a dismal coterie;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the
grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree:
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,

The country-side descended;
 And shepherds from the mountain-
 caves
 Look'd down, half-pleased, half-
 frighten'd,
 As dash'd about the drunken leaves
 The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
 And wanton without measure;
 So youthful and so flexile then,
 You moved her at your pleasure.
 Twang out, my fiddle! shake the
 twigs!

And make her dance attendance;
 Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
 And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age
 I could not move a thistle;
 The very sparrows in the hedge
 Scarce answer to my whistle;
 Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
 With strumming and with scraping,
 A jackass heehaws from the rick,
 The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound
 Like sleepy counsel pleading;
 O Lord! — 'tis in my neighbor's ground,
 The modern Muses reading.
 They read Botanic Treatises,
 And Works on Gardening thro'
 there,
 And Methods of transplanting trees
 To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose
 O'er books of travell'd seamen,
 And show you slips of all that grows
 From England to Van Diemen.
 They read in arbors clipt and cut,
 And alleys, faded places,
 By squares of tropic summer shut
 And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
 Are neither green nor sappy;
 Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
 The spindlings look unhappy.
 Better to me the meanest weed
 That blows upon its mountain,
 The vilest herb that runs to seed
 Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
 And years of cultivation,
 Upon my proper patch of soil
 To grow my own plantation.
 I'll take the showers as they fall,
 I will not vex my bosom:
 Enough if at the end of all
 A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
 Are sparkling to the moon:
 My breath to heaven like vapor goes:
 May my soul follow soon!
 The shadows of the convent-towers
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord:
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skies,
 Or this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and
 dark,
 To yonder shining ground;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee;
 So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
 Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
 The flashes come and go;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom
 waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide —
 A light upon the shining sea —
 The Bridegroom with his bride!

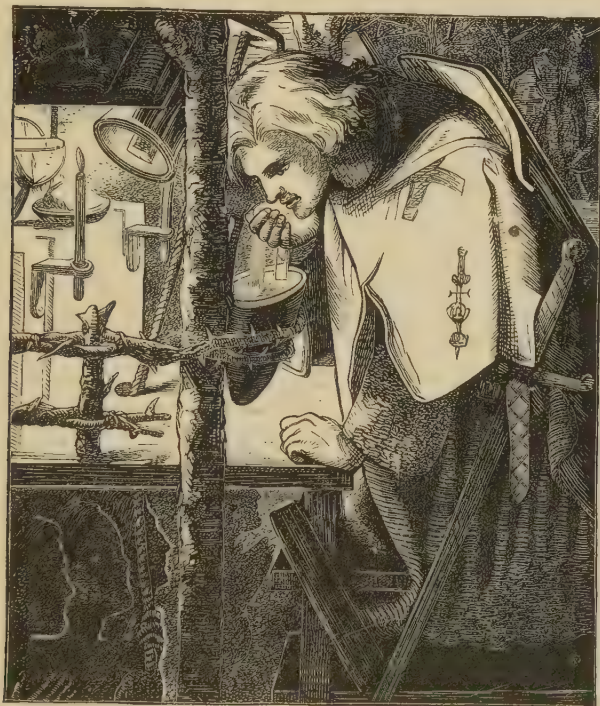
SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of
 men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and
 fly,
 The horse and rider reel:
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favors fall!
 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall:
 But all my heart is drawn above,

My knees are bow'd in crypt and
 shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and
 thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,



*"The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chants resound between."*

The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the
 stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,

The cock crows ere the Christmas
 morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand
 and mail ;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed forms in whistling
 storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy
 fields.

A maiden knight — to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odors haunt my dreams;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armor that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and
 eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
 "O just and faithful knight of God!
 Ride on! the prize is near."
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
 By bridge and ford, by park and
 pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder
 town
 Met me walking on yonder way,
 "And have you lost your heart?"
 she said;
 "And are you married yet, Edward
 Gray?"

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me:
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
 "Sweet Emma Moreland, love no
 more
 Can touch the heart of Edward
 Gray.

"Ellen Adair she loved me well,
 Against her father's and mother's
 will:
 To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
 By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

"Shy she was, and I thought her cold;
 Thought her proud, and fled over
 the sea;
 Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
 When Ellen Adair was dying for
 me.

"Cruel, cruel the words I said!
 Cruelly came they back to-day:
 'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
 'To trouble the heart of Edward
 Gray.'

"There I put my face in the grass —
 Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair:
 I repent me of all I did:
 Speak a little, Ellen Adair!'

"Then I took a pencil, and wrote
 On the mossy stone, as I lay,
 'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair;
 And here the heart of Edward
 Gray!'

"Love may come, and love may go,
 And fly, like a bird, from tree to
 tree;
 But I will love no more, no more,
 Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

"Bitterly wept I over the stone:
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
 There lies the body of Ellen Adair!
 And there the heart of Edward
 Gray!"

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
 To which I most resort,
 How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.
 Go fetch a pint of port:
 But let it not be such as that
 You set before chance-comers,
 But such whose father-grape grew fat
 On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
 But may she still be kind,
 And whisper lovely words, and use
 Her influence on the mind,
 To make me write my random rhymes,
 Ere they be half-forgotten;
 Nor add and alter, many times,
 Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
 Her laurel in the wine,
 And lays it thrice upon my lips,
 These favor'd lips of mine;
 Until the charm have power to make
 New lifeblood warm the bosom,
 And barren commonplaces break
 In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board;
 Her gradual fingers steal
 And touch upon the master-chord
 Of all I felt and feel.
 Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
 And phantom hopes assemble;
 And that child's heart within the man's
 Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
 By many pleasant ways,
 Against its fountain upward runs
 The current of my days :
 I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
 The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
 And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
 My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
 Unboding critic-pen,
 Or that eternal want of pence,
 Which vexes public men,
 Who hold their hands to all, and cry
 For that which all deny them —
 Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
 And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
 Tho' fortune clip my wings,
 I will not cramp my heart, nor take
 Half-views of men and things.
 Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
 There must be stormy weather ;
 But for some true result of good
 All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;
 If old things, there are new ;
 Ten thousand broken lights and
 shapes,
 Yet glimpses of the true.
 Let raffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
 We lack not rhymes and reasons,
 As on this whirling of Time
 We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;
 With fair horizons bound :
 This whole wide earth of light and
 shade
 Comes out a perfect round.
 High over roaring Temple-bar,
 And set in Heaven's third story,
 I look at all things as they are,
 But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest
 Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
 The pint, you brought me, was the best
 That ever came from pipe.
 But tho' the port surpasses praise,
 My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
 Is there some magic in the place ?
 Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,
 No pint of white or red
 Had ever half the power to turn
 This wheel within my head,
 Which bears a season'd brain about,
 Unsubject to confusion,
 Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
 Thro' every convulsion.

For I am of a numerous house,
 With many kinsmen gay,
 Where long and largely we carouse
 As who shall say me nay :
 Each month, a birth-day coming on,
 We drink defying trouble,
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,
 And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
 Had relish fiery-new,
 Or elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
 As old as Waterloo ;
 Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,
 In musty bins and chambers,
 Had cast upon its crusty side
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
 She answer'd to my call,
 She changes with that mood or this,
 Is all-in-all to all :
 She lit the spark within my throat,
 To make my blood run quicker,
 Used all her fiery will, and smote
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
 The waiter's hands, that reach
 To each his perfect pint of stout,
 His proper chop to each.
 He lit not like the common breed
 That with the napkin dally ;
 I think he came like Ganymede,
 From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
 Than modern poultry drop,
 Stept forward on a firmer leg,
 And cramm'd a plumper crop ;
 Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
 Crow'd lustier late and early,
 Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
 And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
 Till in a court he saw
 A something-pottle-bodied boy
 That knuckled at the taw :
 He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and
 good,
 Flew over roof and casement :
 His brothers of the weather stood
 Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spire,
 And follow'd with acclaims,
 A sign to many a staring shire
 Came crowing over Thames.
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
 Till, where the street grows straiter,
 One fix'd for ever at the door,
 And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
 How out of place she makes
 The violet of a legend blow
 Among the chops and steaks !
 'Tis but a steward of the can,
 One shade more plump than com-
 mon ;
 As just and mere a serving-man
 As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me
 down
 Into the common day ?
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,
 Which I shall have to pay ?
 For, something duller than at first,
 Nor wholly comfortable,
 I sit, my empty glass reversed,
 And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
 I take myself to task ;
 Lest of the fulness of my life
 I leave an empty flask :
 For I had hope, by something rare
 To prove myself a poet :
 But, while I plan and plan, my hair
 Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
 Till they be gather'd up ;
 The truth, that flies the flowing can,
 Will haunt the vacant cup :
 And others' follies teach us not,
 Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
 And most, of sterling worth, is what
 Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
 We know not what we know.
 But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;
 'Tis gone, and let it go.
 'Tis gone : a thousand such have slept
 Away from my embraces,
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt
 Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy betters went
 Long since, and came no more ;
 With peals of genial clamor sent
 From many a tavern-door,
 With twisted quirks and happy hits,
 From misty men of letters ;
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits —
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and
 looks
 Had yet their native glow :
 Nor yet the fear of little books
 Had made him talk for show ;
 But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
 He flash'd his random speeches,
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
 Like all good things on earth !
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou
 last,
 At half thy real worth ?
 I hold it good, good things should
 pass :
 With time I will not quarrel :
 It is but yonder empty glass
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
 To which I most resort,
 I too must part : I hold thee dear
 For this good pint of port.
 For this, thou shalt from all things
 suck
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
 And wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
 Shall find her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
 The sphere thy fate allots :
 Thy latter days increased with pence
 Go down among the pots :
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
 In haunts of hungry sinners,
 Old boxes, larded with the steam
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our
 skins,
 Would quarrel with our lot ;
 Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;
 To come and go, and come again,
 Returning like the pewit,
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
 That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
 The thick-set hazel dies ;
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
 The corners of thine eyes :
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest
 Our changeful equinoxes,
 Till mellow Death, like some late
 guest,
 Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt
 cease
 To pace the gritted floor,
 And, laying down an unctuous lease
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;
 No carved cross-bones, the types of
 Death,
 Shall show thee past to Heaven :
 But carved cross-pipes, and, under-
 neath,
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
 And clouds are highest up in air,

Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
They too will wed the morrow morn :
God's blessing on the day !

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from
thee ?"

"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thank'd !" said Alice the
nurse,

"That all comes round so just and
fair :
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are *not* the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse,
my nurse ?"

Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so
wild ?"

"As God's above," said Alice the
nurse,

"I speak the truth : you are my
child.

"The old Earl's daughter died at my
breast ;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread !
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the
nurse,

"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord
Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the
nurse,

"But keep the secret all ye can."
She said, "Not so : but I will know
If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith ?" said Alice
the nurse,

"The man will cleave unto his
right."

"And he shall have it," the lady
replied,

"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother
dear !

Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee."

"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare :
She went by dale, and she went by
down,
With a single rose in her air.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had
brought

Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his
tower :

"O Lady Clare, you shame your
worth !

Why come you drest like a village
maid,

That are the flower of the earth ?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are :

I am a beggar born," she said,

"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ro-
nald,

"For I am yours in word and in
deed.

Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up !

Her heart within her did not fail :
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she
stood :

"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the next in
blood —

"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

He that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong,
Deep as Hell I count his error.
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was: the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbor-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's color heighten'd,
Joyful came his speech:
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
"Chase," he said: the ship flew forward,
And the wind did blow;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired:
Mute with folded arms they waited —
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thunder
Roaring out their doom;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd,
Bullets fell like rain;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.
Spars were splinter'd; decks were broken:
Every mother's son —
Down they dropt — no word was spoken —
Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,

Were their faces grim.
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.
Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart con-founded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error! fearful slaughter!
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

In her ear he whispers gayly,
"If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well."
She replies, in accents fainter,
"There is none I love like thee."
He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maiden she.
He to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof:
Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.
"I can make no marriage present:
Little can I give my wife.
Love will make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life."
They by parks and lodges going
See the lordly castles stand:
Summer woods, about them blowing,
Made a murmur in the land.
From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
"Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."
So she goes by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
Lay betwixt his home and hers;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.
All he shows her makes him dearer:
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.
O but she will love him truly!
He shall have a cheerful home;
She will order all things duly,
When beneath his roof they come.
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,

Till a gateway she discerns
 With armorial bearings stately,
 And beneath the gate she turns;
 Sees a mansion more majestic
 Than all those she saw before:
 Many a gallant gay domestic
 Bows before him at the door.
 And they speak in gentle murmur,
 When they answer to his call,
 While he treads with footsteps firmer,
 Leading on from hall to hall.
 And, while now she wonders blindly,
 Nor the meaning can divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 "All of this is mine and thine."
 Here he lives in state and bounty,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the color flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin:
 As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
 Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove:
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.
 So she strove against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank:
 Shaped her heart with woman's meek-
 ness
 To all duties of her rank:
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much.
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and
 morn,
 With the burthen of an honor
 Unto which she was not born.
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, "Oh, that he
 Were once more that landscape-
 painter,
 Which did win my heart from
 me!"
 So she droop'd and droop'd before
 him,
 Fading slowly from his side:
 Three fair children first she bore
 him,
 Then before her time she died.
 Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 "Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was
 wed."
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy
 That tosses at the harbor-mouth;
 And madly danced our hearts with joy,
 As fast we fled to the South:
 How fresh was every sight and sound
 On open main or winding shore!
 We knew the merry world was round,
 And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the
 brow,
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail:
 The Lady's-head upon the prow
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd
 the gale.
 The broad seas swell'd to meet the
 keel,
 And swept behind; so quick the run,
 We felt the good ship shake and reel,
 We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
 And burn the threshold of the night,
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!
 How oft the purple-skirted robe
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
 As thro' the slumber of the globe
 Again we dash'd into the dawn!

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
 Of waters lighten'd into view;
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
 Changed every moment as we flew.
 Far ran the naked moon across
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,
 Or flying shone, the silver boss
 Of her own halo's dusky shield;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
 We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we drove,
 Where those long swells of breaker
 sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
 brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine;
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the
 bark!
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the darl';
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and
 fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor
 flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and
 night,
 And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight.
 Her face was evermore unseen,
 And fixt upon the far sea-line;
 But each man murmur'd, "O my
 Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
 Like Fancy made of golden air,
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge
 fair,
 Now high on waves that idly burst
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd
 the sea,
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us — him
 We pleased not — he was seldom
 pleased:
 He saw not far: his eyes were dim:
 But ours he swore were all diseased.
 "A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,
 "A ship of fools," he sneer'd and
 wept.
 And overboard one stormy night
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn;
 We lov'd the glories of the world,
 But laws of nature were our scorn.
 For blasts would rise and rave and
 cease,
 But whence were those that drove
 the sail
 Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
 And to and thro' the counter gale?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
 For still we follow'd where she led:

Now mate is blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead,
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
 We follow that which flies before:
 We know the merry world is round,
 And we may sail for evermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND
QUEEN GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

Like souls that balance joy and pain,
 With tears and smiles from heaven
 again
 The maiden Spring upon the plain
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.
 In crystal vapor everywhere
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song:
 Sometimes the throistle whistled
 strong:
 Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd
 along,
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of
 wrong:
 By grassy capes with fuller sound
 In curves the yellowing river ran,
 And drooping chestnut-buds began
 To spread into the perfect fan,
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
 Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
 With blissful treble ringing clear.
 She seem'd a part of joyous
 Spring:
 A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
 Buckled with golden clasps before;
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,
 In mosses mixt with violet
 Her cream-white mule his pastern set:
 And fletter now she skimm'd the
 plains
 Than she whose elfin prancer springs
 By night to eery warblings,
 When all the glimmering moorland
 rings
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
 The happy winds upon her play'd,
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid:
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,
 A man had given all other bliss,
 And all his wordly worth for this,
 To waste his whole heart in one
 kiss
 Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
 Thy tribute wave deliver:
 No more by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.



SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
 A rivulet then a river:
 No where by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.
 But here will sigh thine alder tree,
 And here thine aspen shiver;

And here by thee will hum the bee,
 For ever and for ever.
 A thousand suns will stream on thee,
 A thousand moons will quiver;
 But not by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
 She was more fair than words can
 say :
 Bare-footed came the beggar maid
 Before the king Cophetua.
 In robe and crown the king stept down,
 To meet and greet her on her way ;
 "It is no wonder," said the lords,
 "She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
 She in her poor attire was seen :
 One praised her ankles, one 'her
 eyes,
 One her dark hair and lovesome
 mien.
 So sweet a face, such angel grace,
 In all that land had never been :
 Cophetua sware a royal oath :
 "This beggar maid shall be my
 queen!"



*"In robe and crown the king stept down,
 To meet and greet her on her way."*

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked
 hands ;
 Close to the sun in lonely lands,
 Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
 He watches from his mountain walls,
 And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
 Yon orange sunset waning slow :

From fringes of the faded eve,
 O, happy planet, eastward go ;
 Till over thy dark shoulder glow
 Thy silver sister-world, and rise
 To glass herself in dewy eyes
 That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
 Dip forward under starry light,
 And move me to my marriage-morn,
 And round again to happy night.

Come not, when I am dead,
 To drop thy foolish tears upon my
 grave,

To trample round my fallen head,
 And vex the unhappy dust thou
 wouldst not save.
 There let the wind sweep and the
 plover cry;
 But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy
 crime
 I care no longer, being all unblest:
 Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick
 of Time,
 And I desire to rest.
 Pass on, weak heart, and leave me
 where I lie:
 Go by, go by.

THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
 A black yew gloom'd the stagnant
 air,
 I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
 And saw the altar cold and bare.
 A clog of lead was round my feet,
 A band of pain across my brow;
 "Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall
 meet
 Before you hear my marriage vow."

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
 That mock'd the wholesome human
 heart,
 And then we met in wrath and wrong,
 We met, but only meant to part.
 Full cold my greeting was and dry;
 She faintly smiled, she hardly
 moved;
 I saw with half-unconscious eye
 She wore the colors I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
 With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
 Then raised her head with lips com-
 prest,
 And gave my letters back to me.
 And gave the trinkets and the rings,
 My gifts, when gifts of mine could
 please;
 As looks a father on the things
 Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV.

She told me all her friends had said;
 I raged against the public liar;
 She talk'd as if her love were dead,
 But in my words were seeds of fire.
 "No more of love; your sex is known:
 I never will be twice deceived.
 Henceforth I trust the man alone,
 The woman cannot be believed.

V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of
 Hell —
 And women's slander is the worst,
 And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
 Thro' you, my life will be accurst."
 I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
 I shook her breast with vague
 alarms —
 Like torrents from a mountain source
 We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
 And sweet the vapor-braided blue,
 Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
 As homeward by the church I drew.
 The very graves appear'd to smile,
 So fresh they rose in shadow'd
 swells;
 "Dark porch," I said, "and silent
 aisle,
 There comes a sound of marriage
 bells.

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late:
 A youth came riding toward a palace-
 gate.
 He rode a horse with wings, that would
 have flown,
 But that his heavy rider kept him
 down.
 And from the palace came a child of
 sin,
 And took him by the curls, and led
 him in,
 Where sat a company with heated
 eyes,
 Expecting when a fountain should
 arise:
 A sleepy light upon their brows and
 lips —
 As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
 Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles
 and capes —
 Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
 shapes,
 By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,
 and piles of grapes.

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow
 sound,
 Gathering up from all the lower
 ground;
 Narrowing in to where they sat assem-
 bled
 Low voluptuous music winding trem-
 bled,
 Wov'n in circles: they that heard it
 sigh'd,

Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,
 Swung themselves, and in low tones
 replied ;
 Till the fountain spouted, showering
 wide
 Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;
 Then the music touch'd the gates and
 died ;
 Rose again from where it seem'd to
 fail,
 Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing
 gale ;
 Till thronging in and in, to where they
 waited,
 As 'twere a hundred-throated nightin-
 gale,
 The strong tempestuous treble throb'd
 and palpitated ;
 Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid
 mazes,
 Flung the torrent rainbow round :
 Then they started from their places,
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,
 Half-invisible to the view,
 Wheeling with precipitate paces
 To the melody, till they flew,
 Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
 Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
 Like to Furies, like to Graces,
 Dash'd together in blinding dew :
 Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
 The nerve-dissolving melody,
 Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a moun-
 tain-tract,
 That girt the region with high cliff and
 lawn :
 I saw that every morning, far with-
 drawn
 Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
 God made Himself an awful rose of
 dawn,
 Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
 From those still heights, and, slowly
 drawing near,
 A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
 Came floating on for many a month
 and year,
 Unheeded : and I thought I would
 have spoken,
 And warn'd that madman ere it grew
 too late :
 But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine
 was broken,
 When that cold vapor touch'd the
 palace gate,
 And link'd again. I saw within my
 head
 A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean
 as death,

Who slowly rode across a wither'd
 heath,
 And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

" Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
 Here is custom come your way ;
 Take my brute, and lead him in,
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

" Bitter barmaid, waning fast !
 See that sheets are on my bed ;
 What ! the flower of life is past :
 It is long before you wed.

" Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,
 At the Dragon on the heath !
 Let us have a quiet hour,
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

" I am old, but let me drink ;
 Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
 I remember, when I think,
 That my youth was half divine.

" Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
 When a blanket wraps the day,
 When the rotten woodland drips,
 And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

" Sit thee down, and have no shame,
 Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :
 What care I for any name ?
 What for order or degree ?

" Let me screw thee up a peg :
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
 Callest thou that thing a leg ?
 Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

" Thou shalt not be saved by works :
 Thou hast been a sinner too :
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
 Empty scarecrows, I and you !

" Fill the cup, and fill the can :
 Have a rouse before the morn :
 Every moment dies a man,
 Every moment one is born.

" We are men of ruin'd blood ;
 Therefore comes it we are wise.
 Fish are we that love the mud,
 Rising to no fancy-flies.

" Name and fame ! to fly sublime
 Thro' the courts, the camps, the
 schools,
 Is to be the ball of Time,
 Banded by the hands of fools.

" Friendship ! — to be two in one —
 Let the canting liar pack !
 Well I know, when I am gone,
 How she mouths behind my back.

"Virtue! — to be good and just —
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"O! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave:
They are fill'd with idle spleen;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gayly doth she tread;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new;
She is of an ancient house:
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs,
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool —
Visions of a perfect State:
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;
Set thy hoary fancies free;
What is loathsome to the young
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

"Tell me tales of thy first love —
April hopes, the fools of chance;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads:
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads!

"You are bones, and what of that?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam — if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

"No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye — nor yet your lip:
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo! God's likeness — the ground-
plan —
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor
framed:
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed!

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance!
Hob-and-nob with brother Death!

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near:
What! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup and fill the can:
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!
Dregs of life, and lees of man:
Yet we will not die forlorn."

v.

The voice grew faint: there came a
further change:
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-
range:
Below were men and horses pierced
with worms,
And slowly quickening into lower
forms:

By shards and scurf of salt, and scum
 of dross,
 Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd
 with moss.
 Then some one spake: "Behold! it
 was a crime
 Of sense avenged by sense that wore
 with time."
 Another said: "The crime of sense
 became
 The crime of malice, and is equal
 blame."
 And one: "He had not wholly
 quench'd his power;
 A little grain of conscience made him
 sour."
 At last I heard a voice upon the slope
 Cry to the summit, "Is there any
 hope?"
 To which an answer peal'd from that
 high land,
 But in a tongue no man could under-
 stand;
 And on the glimmering limit far with-
 drawn
 God made Himself an awful rose of
 dawn.

TO —,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

"Cursed be he that moves my bones,"
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
 If such be worth the winning now,
 And gain'd a laurel for your brow
 Of sounder leaf than I can claim;

But you have made the wiser choice,
 A life that moves to gracious ends
 Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
 A deedful life, a silent voice:

And you have miss'd the irreverent
 doom

Of those that wear the Poet's crown:
 Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
 Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,
 Nor leave his music as of old,
 But round him ere he scarce be cold
 Begins the scandal and the cry:

"Proclaim the faults he would not
 show:

Break lock and seal: betray the
 trust:

Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just
 The many-headed beast should know."

Ah shameless! for he did but sing
 A song that pleased us from its
 worth;

No public life was his on earth,
 No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best:
 His worst he kept, his best he gave.
 My Shakespeare's curse on clown
 and knave
 Who will not let his ashes rest!

Who make it seem more sweet to be
 The little life of bank and brier,
 The bird that pipes his lone desire
 And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud
 And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
 For whom the carrion vulture waits
 To tear his heart before the crowd!

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN
 GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
 Of water, sheets of summer glass,
 The long divine Peneïan pass,
 The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
 With such a pencil, such a pen,
 You shadow forth to distant men,
 I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
 And track'd you still on classic
 ground,
 I grew in gladness till I found
 My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
 And glisten'd — here and there alone
 The broad-limb'd Gods at random
 thrown
 By fountain-urns; — and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
 Of cavern pillars; on the swell
 The silver lily heaved and fell;
 And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
 By dancing rivulets fed his flocks
 To him who sat upon the rocks,
 And fluted to the morning sea.

BREAK, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
 And I would that my tongue could
 utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at
play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd
hand,
And the sound of a voice that is
still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is
dead
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of
the street,



*"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!"*

A light wind blew from the gates of
the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the
wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and
sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her
cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the
bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down
on his beak,

And stared, with his foot on the
prey,
And the nightingale thought, "I have
sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to
the East
And he for Italy — too late — too late:
One whom the strong sons of the
world despise;

For lucky rhymes to him were scrip
and share,
And mellow metres more than cent
for cent ;
Nor could he understand how money
breeds,
Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself
could make
The thing that is not as the thing
that is.
O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks
we say,
Of those that held their heads above
the crowd,

They flourish'd then or then ; but life
in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only
touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist
of green,
And nothing perfect : yet the brook
he loved,
For which, in branding summers of
Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neil-
gherry air
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,



"I come from haunts of coot and hern."

Prattling the primrose fancies of the
boy,
Tome that loved him ; for "O brook,"
he says,
"O babbling brook," says Edmund in
his rhyme,
"Whence come you ?" and the brook,
why not ? replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorns, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite
worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darn-
ley bridge,
It has more ivy ; there the river ; and
there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and
river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"But Philip chatter'd more than
brook or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you
caught

His weary daylong chirping, like the
dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in sum-
mer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one
child!
A maiden of our century, yet most
meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not
coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel
wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when
the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit
within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good
turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and be-
trothed,
James Willows, of one name and
heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back —
the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund;
crost
By that old bridge which, half in
ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the
gleam.
Beyond it, where the waters marry —
crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny
Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate.
The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding
hinge,
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a case-
ment, 'Run'

To Katie somewhere in the walks
below,
'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she
moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine
bowers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids
down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a
boon.

"What was it? less of sentiment
than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive
tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philan-
thropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate
the Deed.

"She told me. She and James had
quarrell'd. Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she
said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest
the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering
jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd
James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once
from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed
foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass.
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I
ask'd
If James were coming. 'Coming
every day,'
She answer'd, 'ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke
him short;
And James departed vexed with him
and her.'
How could I help her? 'Would I —
was it wrong?'
(Claspt hands and that petitionary
grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere
she spoke)
'O would I take her father for one
hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to
me!'
And even while she spoke, I saw where
James
Made toward us, like a wader in the
surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in
meadow-sweet.

"O Katie, what I suffer'd for your
sake!

For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he
rose:

He led me thro' the short sweet-
smelling lanes

Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he
went.

He praised his land, his horses, his
machines;

He praised his ploughs, his cows, his
hogs, his dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his
guinea-hens;

His pigeons, who in session on their
roofs

Approved him, bowing at their own
deserts:

Then from the plaintive mother's teat
he took

Her blind and shuddering puppies,
naming each,

And naming those, his friends, for
whom they were:

Then crost the common into Darnley
chase

To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse
and fern

Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,

He pointed out a pasturing colt, and
said:

'That was the four-year-old I sold the
Squire.'

And there he told a long long-winded
tale

Of how the Squire had seen the colt
at grass,

And how it was the thing his daughter
wish'd,

And how he sent the bailiff to the
farm

To learn the price, and what the price
he ask'd,

And how the bailiff swore that he was
mad,

But he stood firm; and so the matter
hung;

He gave them line: and five days after
that

He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd some-
thing more,

But he stood firm; and so the matter
hung;

He knew the man; the colt would fetch
its price;

He gave them line: and how by chance
at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)

He found the bailiff riding by the
farm,

And, talking from the point, he drew
him in,

And there he mellow'd all his heart
with ale,

Until they closed a bargain, hand in
hand.

"Then, while I breathed in sight of
haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it? recom-
menced,

And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy,
Tallyho,

Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the
Jilt,

Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the
rest,

Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and

so

We turn'd our foreheads from the fall-
ing sun,

And following our own shadows thrice
as long

As when they follow'd us from Philip's
door,

Arrived, and found the sun of sweet
content

Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things
well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,

I slide by hazel covers;

I move the sweet forget-me-nots

That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,

Among my skimming swallows;

I make the netted sunbeam dance

Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars

In brambly wildernesses;

I linger by my shingly bars;

I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow

To join the brimming river,

For men may come and men may go,

But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these
are gone,

All gone. My dearest brother, Ed-
mund, sleeps,

Not by the well-known stream and
rustic spire,

But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and

he,

Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of
words

Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie

walks

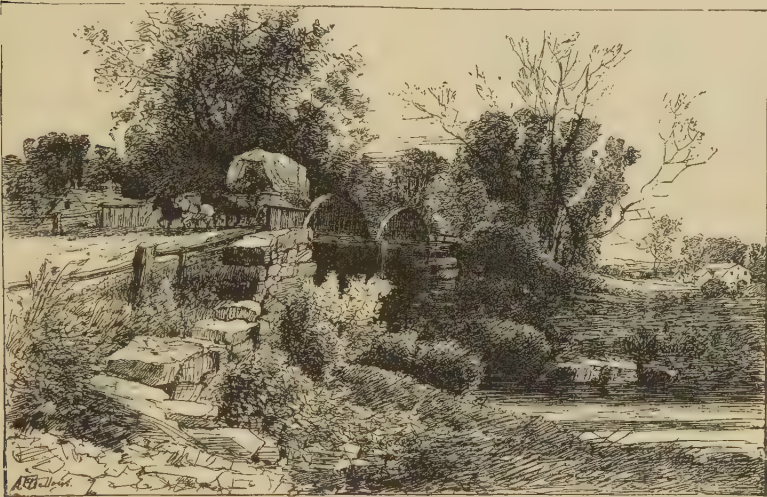
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other

stars,

And breathes in converse seasons. All
are gone."

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a
 stile
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his
 mind
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er
 the brook
 A tousured head in middle age forlorn,
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden
 a low breath
 Of tender air made tremble in the
 hedge
 The fragile bindweed-bells and briony
 rings;
 And he look'd up. There stood a
 maiden near,
 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he
 stared

On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when
 the shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit
 within:
 Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you
 from the farm?"
 "Yes," answer'd she. "Pray stay a
 little: pardon me;
 What do they call you?" "Katie."
 "That were strange.
 What surname?" "Willows." "No!"
 "That is my name."
 "Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-
 perplext,
 That Katie laugh'd, and laughing
 blush'd, till he



*"And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river."*

Laugh'd also, but as one before he
 wakes,
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness
 in his dream.
 Then looking at her; "Too happy,
 fresh and fair,
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's
 best bloom,
 To be the ghost of one who bore your
 name
 About these meadows, twenty years
 ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie,
 "we came back.
 We bought the farm we tenanted be-
 fore.
 Am I so like her? so they said on
 board.

Sir, if you knew her in her English
 days,
 My mother, as it seems you did, the
 days
 That most she loves to talk of, come
 with me.
 My brother James is in the harvest-
 field:
 But she—you will be welcome—(),
 come in!"

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

Dust are our frames; and, gilded dust,
 our pride
 Looks only for a moment whole and
 sound;
 Like that long-buried body of the king.

Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone —
Old, and a mine of memories — who had served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER, that almighty man,
The county God — in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate king —
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-gates
And swang besides on many a windy sign —
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own —
What lovelier of his own had he than her,
His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully?
But "he that marries her marries her name"
This fiat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Inspid as the Queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook!
A sleepy land, where under the same wheel
The same old rut would deepen year by year;
Where almost all the village had one name;
Where Aylmer followed Aylmer at the Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory

Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well had made
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs,
Have also set his many-shielded tree?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage once.
When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York's white rose as red as Lancaster's,
With wounded peace which each had prick'd to death.
"Not proven" Averill said, or laughingly
"Some other race of Averills" — prov'n or no,
What cared he? what, if other or the same?
He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighborhood,
Would often, in his walks with Edith, claim
A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam'd,
Beneath a manlike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,

We know not wherefore ; bounteously
made,
And yet so finely, that a troublous
touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in
a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the
first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years
after, hers :
So much the boy foreran : but when
his date
Doubled her own, for want of play-
mates, he
(Since Averill was a decade and a half
His elder, and their parents under-
ground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite,
and roll'd
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her
dipt
Against the rush of the air in the
prone swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-
ranged
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept
it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show'd her the fairy footings on the
grass,
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty marestail forest, fairy
pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows
aim'd
All at one mark, all hitting : make-
believes
For Edith and himself : or else he
forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,
wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and
true love
Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude and
faint,
But where a passion yet unborn per-
haps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightin-
gale.
And thus together, save for college-
times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heaven in lavish bounty moulded,
grew.
And more and more, the maiden
woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill ; there,
when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer
spears

That soon should wear the garland ;
there again
When burr and bine were gather'd ;
lastly there
At Christmas ; ever welcome at the
Hall,
On whose dull sameness his full tide
of youth
Broke with a phosphorescence charm-
ing even
My lady ; and the Baronet yet had
laid
No bar between them : dull and self-
involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his
height
With half-allowing smiles for all the
world,
And mighty courteous in the main —
his pride
Lay deeper than to wear it as his
ring —
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walk-
ing with her
Than for his old Newfoundland's, when
they ran
To loose him at the stables, for he
rose
Two footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third : and how
should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four
chance-met eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing,
follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn ?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of
all.

So these young hearts not knowing
that they loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a
bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken
ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
By Averill : his, a brother's love, that
hung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er
her peace,
Might have been other, save for
Leolin's —
Who knows ? but so they wander'd,
hour by hour
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd,
and drank
The magic cup that filled itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to her-
self.
For out beyond her lodges, where the
brook
Vocal, with here and there a silence,
ran

By sallowy rims, arose the laborers' homes,
 A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
 That dimpling died into each other, huts
 At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
 Her art, her hand, her counsel all had wrought
 About them: here was one that, summer-blanch'd,
 Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's joy
 In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
 The warm-blue breathings of a hidden hearth
 Broke from a bower of vine and honeysuckle:
 One look'd all rosetree, and another wore
 A close-set robe of jasmine sown with stars:
 This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
 About it; this, a milky-way on earth,
 Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
 A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
 One, almost to the martin-haunted caves
 A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;
 Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere;
 And Edith ever visitant with him,
 He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
 For she — so lowly-lovely and so loving,
 Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
 Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
 Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
 Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
 That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
 Of comfort and an open hand of help,
 A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
 Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
 To ailing wife or wailing infancy
 Or old bedridden palsy, — was adored;
 He, loved for her and for himself.
 A grasp
 Having the warmth and muscle of the heart,
 A childly way with children, and a laugh
 Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
 Were no false passport to that easy realm,

Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,
 Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth
 The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
 Heard the good mother softly whisper "Bless,
 God bless 'em: marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
 My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
 With half a score of swarthy faces came.
 His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
 Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;
 Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
 Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd
 Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
 Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
 Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"
 My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
 And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
 Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
 To listen: unawares they flitted off,
 Busying themselves about the flowerage
 That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
 The meteor of a splendid season, she,
 Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
 Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:
 But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
 Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:
 Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye,
 Hated him with a momentary hate.
 Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:
 I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
 His oriental gifts on everyone
 And most on Edith: like a storm he came,
 And shook the house, and like a storm he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
 He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
 When others had been tested) there was one,
 A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
 Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself

Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
 Made by a breath. I know not
 whence at first,
 Nor of what race, the work; but as he
 told
 The story, storming a hill-fort of
 thieves
 He got it; for their captain after fight,
 His comrades having fought their
 last below,
 Was climbing up the valley; at whom
 he shot:
 Down from the beetling crag to which
 he clung
 Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
 This dagger with him, which when
 now admired
 By Edith whom his pleasure was to
 please,
 At once the costly Sahib yielded to
 her.

And Leolin, coming after he was
 gone,
 Tost over all her presents petulantly:
 And when she show'd the wealthy
 scabbard, saying
 "Look what a lovely piece of work-
 manship!"
 Slight was his answer "Well—I care
 not for it":
 Then playing with the blade he
 prick'd his hand,
 "A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"
 "But would it be more gracious"
 ask'd the girl
 "Were I to give this gift of his to one
 That is no lady?" "Gracious? No"
 said he.
 "Me?—but I cared not for it. O
 pardon me,
 I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
 "Take it" she added sweetly, "tho'
 his gift;
 For I am more ungracious ev'n than
 you,
 I care not for it either"; and he said
 "Why then I love it": but Sir Aylmer
 past,
 And neither loved nor liked the thing
 he heard.

The next day came a neighbor.
 Blues and reds
 They talk'd of: blues were sure of it,
 he thought:
 Then of the latest fox—where started
 —kill'd
 In such a bottom: "Peter had the
 brush,
 My Peter, first": and did Sir Aylmer
 know
 That great pock-pitten fellow had
 been caught?
 Then made his pleasure echo, hand to
 hand,

And rolling as it were the substance
 of it
 Between his palms a moment up and
 down—
 "The birds were warm, the birds were
 warm upon him;
 We have him now": and had Sir
 Aylmer heard—
 Nay, but he must—the land was
 ringing of it—
 This blacksmith border-marriage—
 one they knew—
 Raw from the nursery—who could
 trust a child?
 That cursed France with her egalities!
 And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
 With nearing chair and lower'd ac-
 cent) think—
 For people talk'd—that it was wholly
 wise
 To let that handsome fellow Averill
 walk
 So freely with his daughter? people
 talk'd—
 The boy might get a notion into
 him;
 The girl might be entangled ere she
 knew.
 Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening
 spoke:
 "The girl and boy, Sir, know their
 differences!"
 "Good," said his friend, "but watch!"
 and he, "Enough,
 More than enough, Sir! I can guard
 my own."
 They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer
 watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the
 house
 Had fallen first, was Edith that same
 night;
 Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a
 rough piece
 Of early rigid color, under which
 Withdrawing by the counter door to
 that
 Which Leolin open'd, she cast back
 upon him
 A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He,
 as one
 Caught in a burst of unexpected
 storm,
 And pelted with outrageous epi-
 thets,
 Turning beheld the Powers of the
 House
 On either side the hearth, indignant;
 her,
 Cooling her false cheek with a feather-
 fan,
 Him, glaring, by his own stale devil
 spurr'd,
 And, like a beast hard-ridden, breath-
 ing hard.

"Ungenerous, dishonorable, base,
 Presumptuous! trusted as he was with
 her,
 The sole succeder to their wealth,
 their lands,
 The last remaining pillar of their
 house,
 The one transmitter of their ancient
 name,
 Their child." "Our child!" "Our
 heiress!" "Ours!" for still,
 Like echoes from beyond a hollow,
 came
 Her sicklier iteration. Last he said,
 "Boy, mark me! for your fortunes
 are to make.
 I swear you shall not make them out
 of mine.
 Now inasmuch as you have practised
 on her,
 Perplext her, made her half forget
 herself,
 Swerve from her duty to herself and
 us —
 Things in an Aylmer deem'd impos-
 sible,
 Far as we track ourselves—I say
 that this —
 Else I withdraw favor and counte-
 nance
 From you and yours for ever—shall
 you do.
 Sir, when you see her—but you shall
 not see her—
 No, you shall write, and not to her,
 but me:
 And you shall say that having spoken
 with me,
 And after look'd into yourself, you
 find
 That you meant nothing—as indeed
 you know
 That you meant nothing. Such a
 match as this!
 Impossible, prodigious!" These were
 words,
 As meted by his measure of him-
 self,
 Arguing boundless forbearance: after
 which,
 And Leolin's horror-stricken answer,
 "I
 So foul a traitor to myself and her,
 Never oh never," for about as long
 As the wind-hover hangs in balance,
 paused
 Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm
 within,
 Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and
 crying
 "Boy, should I find you by my doors
 again,
 My men shall lash you from them like
 a dog;
 Hence!" with a sudden execration
 drove

The footstool from before him, and
 arose;
 So, stammering "scoundrel" out of
 teeth that ground
 As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin
 still
 Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old
 man
 Follow'd, and under his own lintel
 stood
 Storming with lifted hands, a hoary
 face
 Meet for the reverence of the hearth,
 but now,
 Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd
 moon,
 Vext with unworthy madness, and
 deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful
 eye
 That watch'd him, till he heard the
 ponderous door
 Close, crashing with long echoes thro'
 the land,
 Went Leolin; then, his passions all
 in flood
 And masters of his motion, furiously
 Down thro' the bright lawns to his
 brother's ran,
 And foam'd away his heart at Aver-
 ill's ear:
 Whom Averill solaced as he might,
 amazed:
 The man was his, had been his fath-
 er's, friend:
 He must have seen, himself had seen
 it long;
 He must have known, himself had
 known: besides,
 He never yet had set his daughter
 forth
 Here in the woman-markets of the
 west,
 Where our Caucasians let themselves
 be sold.
 Some one, he thought, had slander'd
 Leolin to him.
 "Brother, for I have loved you more
 as son
 Than brother, let me tell you: I my-
 self—
 What is their pretty saying? jilted,
 is it?
 Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.
 Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the
 shame
 The woman should have borne, humili-
 ated,
 I lived for years a stunted sunless life;
 Till after our good parents past away
 Watching your growth, I seem'd again
 to grow.
 Leolin, I almost sin in envying you:
 The very whitest lamb in all my
 fold

Loves you: I know her: the worst
thought she has
Is whiter even than her pretty hand:
She must prove true: for, brother,
where two fight
The strongest wins, and truth and love
are strength,
And you are happy: let her parents
be."

But Leolin cried out the more upon
them —
Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress,
wealth,
Their wealth, their heiress! wealth
enough was theirs
For twenty matches. Were he lord
of this,
Why twenty boys and girls should
marry on it,
And forty blest ones bless him, and
himself
Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He
believed
This filthy marriage-hindering Mam-
mon made
The harlot of the cities: nature crost
Was mother of the foul adulteries
That saturate soul with body. Name,
too! name,
Their ancient name! they *might* be
proud; its worth
Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she
had look'd
Darling, to-night! they must have
rated her
Beyond all tolerance. These old
pheasant-lords,
These partridge-breeders of a thou-
sand years,
Who had mildew'd in their thousands,
doing nothing
Since Egbert — why, the greater their
disgrace!
Fall back upon a name! rest, rot in
that!
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler?
fools,
With such a vantage-ground for noble-
ness!
He had known a man, a quintessence
of man,
The life of all — who madly loved —
and he,
Thwarted by one of these old father-
fools,
Had rioted his life out, and made an
end.
He would not do it! her sweet face
and faith
Held him from that: but he had pow-
ers, he knew it:
Back would he to his studies, make a
name,
Name, fortune too: the world should
ring of him

To shame these mouldy Aylmers in
their graves:
Chancellor, or what is greatest would
he be —
"O brother, I am grieved to learn
your grief —
Give me my fling, and let me say my
say."

At which, like one that sees his own
excess,
And easily forgives it as his own,
He laugh'd; and then was mute; but
presently
Wept like a storm: and honest Averill
seeing
How low his brother's mood had fallen,
fetch'd
His richest beeswing from a binn re-
served
For banquets, praised the waning red,
and told
The vintage — when *this* Aylmer came
of age —
Then drank and past it; till at length
the two,
Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again,
agreed
That much allowance must be made
for men.
After an angry dream this kindlier
glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose
held.

Yet once by night again the lovers
met,
A perilous meeting under the tall pines
That darken'd all the northward of
her Hall.
Him, to her meek and modest bosom
prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter
her:
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labor for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. "Write to
me!
They loved me, and because I love
their child
They hate me: there is war between
us, dear,
Which breaks all bonds but ours; we
must remain
Sacred to one another." So they
talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort: the
wind blew;
The rain of heaven, and their own
bitter tears,
Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,
mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each
other

In darkness, and above them roar'd
the pine.

So Leolin went; and as we task our-
selves
To learn a language known but smat-
teringly
In phrases here and there at random,
toil'd
Mastering the lawless science of our
law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune
led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and
fame.
The jests, that flash'd about the plead-
er's room,
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the
scurrilous tale, —
Old scandals buried now seven decades
deep
In other scandals that have lived and
died,
And left the living scandal that shall
die —
Were dead to him already; bent as he
was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong
in hopes,
And prodigal of all brain-labor he,
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exer-
cise,
Except when for a breathing-while at
eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he
ran
Beside the river-bank: and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands
of power
Were bloodier, and the according
hearts of men
Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-
breeze,
Which fann'd the gardens of that rival
rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him
breathed
Far purer in his rushings to and
fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with
air,
Then to his books again. My lady's
cousin,
Half-sickening of his pension'd after-
noon,
Drove in upon the student once or
twice,
Ran a Malayan amuck against the
times,
Had golden hopes for France and all
mankind,
Answer'd all queries touching those at
home

With a heaved shoulder and a saucy
smile,
And fain had haled him out into the
world,
And air'd him there: his nearer friend
would say
"Screw not the chord too sharply lest
it snap."
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger
forth
From where his worldless heart had
kept it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of
him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:
For heart, I think, help'd head: her
letters too,
Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she
found
Or made occasion, being strictly
watch'd,
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till
he saw
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon
him.

But they that cast her spirit into
flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued
themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her
good.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or
wealth
Might lie within their compass, him
they lured
Into their net made pleasant by the
baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about
their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull ban-
quets, made
The nightly wirer of their innocent
hare
Falter before he took it. All in vain.
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
So often, that the folly taking wings
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the
wind
With rumor, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,
And laughter to their lords: but those
at home,
As hunters round a hunted creature
draw,
The cordon close and closer toward
the death,
Narrow'd her goings out and comings
in;
Forbade her first the house of Averill,
Then closed her access to the wealthier
farms,

Last from her own home-circle of the
 poor
 They barr'd her: yet she bore it: yet
 her cheek
 Kept color: wondrous! but, O mystery!
 What amulet drew her down to that
 old oak,
 So old, that twenty years before, a
 part
 Falling had let appear the brand of
 John —
 Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,
 but now
 The broken base of a black tower, a
 cave
 Of touchwood, with a single flourish-
 ing spray.
 There the manorial lord too curiously
 Raking in that millennial touchwood-
 dust
 Found for himself a bitter treasure-
 trove;
 Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and
 read
 Writhing a letter from his child, for
 which
 Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
 A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to
 fly,
 But scared with threats of jail and
 halter gave
 To him that fluster'd his poor parish
 wits
 The letter which he brought, and swore
 besides
 To play their go-between as heretofore
 Nor let them know themselves be-
 tray'd; and then,
 Soul-stricken at their kindness to him,
 went
 Hating his own lean heart and miser-
 able.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot
 dream
 The father panting woke, and oft, as
 dawn
 Aroused the black republic on his
 elms,
 Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue
 brush'd
 Thro' the dim meadow toward his
 treasure-trove,
 Seized it, took home, and to my lady,
 — who made
 A downward crescent of her minion
 mouth,
 Listless in all despondence, — read;
 and tore,
 As if the living passion symbol'd there
 Were living nerves to feel the rent;
 and burnt,
 Now chafing at his own great self
 defied,
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks
 of scorn

In babyisms, and dear diminutives
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
 Of such a love as like a chidden child,
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at
 last
 Hopeless of answer: then tho' Averill
 wrote
 And bade him with good heart sustain
 himself —
 All would be well — the lover heeded
 not,
 But passionately restless came and
 went,
 And rustling once at night about the
 place,
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly
 hurt,
 Raging return'd: nor was it well for her
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of
 pines,
 Watch'd even there; and one was set
 to watch
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd
 them all,
 Yet bitterer from his readings: once
 indeed,
 Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride
 in her,
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her
 tenderly
 Not knowing what possess'd him:
 that one kiss
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon
 earth;
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
 Seem'd hope's returning rose: and
 then ensued
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,
 Or ordeal by kindness; after this
 He seldom crost his child without a
 sneer;
 The mother flow'd in shallower acrimo-
 nies:
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly
 word:
 So that the gentle creature shut from
 all
 Her charitable use, and face to face
 With twenty months of silence, slowly
 lost
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on
 life.
 Last, some low fever ranging round
 to spy
 The weakness of a people or a house,
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer,
 or men,
 Or almost all that is, hurting the
 hurt —
 Save Christ as we believe him — found
 the girl
 And flung her down upon a couch of
 fire,
 Where careless of the household faces
 near,
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,

She, and with her the race of Aylmer,
past.

Star to star vibrates light: may
soul to soul
Strike thro' a finer element of her
own?
So, — from afar, — touch as at once?
or why
That night, that moment, when she
named his name,
Did the keen shriek "Yes love, yes,
Edith, yes,"
Shrill, till the comrade of his cham-
bers woke,
And came upon him half-arisen from
sleep,
With a weird bright eye, sweating and
trembling,
His hair as it were crackling into
flames,
His body half flung forward in pursuit,
And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp
a flyer:
Nor knew he wherefore he had made
the cry;
And being much befooled and idioted
By the rough amity of the other, sank
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing
in,
A breaker of the bitter news from
home,
Found a dead man, a letter edged with
death
Beside him, and the dagger which him-
self
Gave Edith, reddened with no bandit's
blood:
"From Edith" was engraven on the
blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon
his death.
And when he came again, his flock
believed —
Beholding how the years which are
not Time's
Had blasted him — that many thou-
sand days
Were clipt by horror from his term
of life.
Yet the sad mother, for the second
death
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness
of the first,
And being used to find her pastor
texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying
him
To speak before the people of her
child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that
day rose:
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded
woods

Was all the life of it; for hard on
these,
A breathless burthen of low-folded
heavens
Stifed and chill'd at once; but every
roof
Sent out a listener: many too had
known
Edith among the hamlets round, and
since
The parents' harshness and the hap-
less loves
And double death were widely mur-
mur'd, left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced
tabernacle,
To hear him; all in mourning these,
and those
With blots of it about them, ribbon,
glove
Or kerchief; while the church, — one
night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the
lancets, — made
Still paler the pale head of him, who
tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either
grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd
Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from
which
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd
thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the
verse "Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate!"
But lapsed into so long a pause
again
As half amazed half frightened all his
flock:
Then from his height and loneliness
of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his
angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became
one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the
proud,
And all but those who knew the liv-
ing God —
Eight that were left to make a purer
world —
When since had flood, fire, earthquake,
thunder, wrought
Such waste and havoc as the idola-
tries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven
of Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness as
the Highest?

"Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy
 brute Baäl,
 And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
 For with thy worst self hast thou
 clothed thy God.
 Then came a Lord in no wise like to
 Baäl.
 The babe shall lead the lion. Surely
 now
 The wilderness shall blossom as the
 rose.
 Crown thyself, worm, and worship
 thine own lusts!—
 No coarse and blockish God of acreage
 Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel
 to—
 Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
 And princely halls, and farms, and
 flowing lawns,
 And heaps of living gold that daily
 grow,
 And title-scrolls and gorgeous heral-
 dries.
 In such a shape dost thou behold thy
 God.
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*;
 for thine
 Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
 Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
 The deathless ruler of thy dying house
 Is wounded to the death that cannot
 die;
 And tho' thou numberest with the
 followers
 Of One who cried, 'Leave all and fol-
 low me.'
 Thee therefore with His light about
 thy feet,
 Thee with His message ringing in thine
 ears,
 Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord
 from Heaven,
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the
 Mighty God,
 Count the more base idolater of the
 two;
 Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
 Bodies, but souls—thy children's—
 thro' the smoke.
 The blight of low desires—darkening
 thine own
 To thine own likeness; or if one of
 these,
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight
 and fair—
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a
 one
 By those who most have cause to sor-
 row for her—
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of
 corn,
 Fair as the angel that said 'Hail!'
 she seem'd,

Who entering fill'd the house with
 sudden light.
 For so mine own was brighten'd:
 where indeed
 The roof so lowly but that beam of
 Heaven
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway?
 whose the babe
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor
 child of shame
 The common care whom no one cared
 for, leapt
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten
 heart,
 As with the mother he had never
 known,
 In gambols; for her fresh and inno-
 cent eyes
 Had such a star of morning in their
 blue,
 That all neglected places of the
 field
 Broke into nature's music when they
 saw her.
 Low was her voice, but won mysteri-
 ous way
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder
 one
 Was all but silence—free of alms
 her hand—
 The hand that robbed your cottage-
 walls with flowers
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little
 ones;
 How often placed upon the sick man's
 brow
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow
 smooth!
 Had you one sorrow and she shared
 it not?
 One burthen and she would not lighten
 it?
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
 Or when some heat of difference
 sparkled out,
 How sweetly would she glide between
 your wraths,
 And steal you from each other! for
 she walk'd
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord
 of love,
 Who still'd the rolling wave of
 Galilee!
 And one—of him I was not bid to
 speak—
 Was always with her, whom you also
 knew.
 Him too you loved, for he was worthy
 love.
 And these had been together from the
 first;
 They might have been together till
 the last.
 Friends, this frail bark of ours, when
 sorely tried,

May wreck itself without the pilot's
guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge:
hope with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went
hence with shame?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of
these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd
walls,
'My house is left unto me desolate.'

While thus he spoke, his hearers
wept; but some,
Sons of the glebe, with other frowns
than those
That knit themselves for summer
shadow, scowl'd
At their great lord. He, when it
seem'd he saw
No pale sheet-lightnings from afar,
but fork'd
Of the near storm, and aiming at his
head,
Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, sol-
dier-like,
Erect: but when the preacher's ca-
dence flow'd
Softening thro' all the gentle attri-
butes
Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd
his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron
mouth;
And "O pray God that he hold up"
she thought
"Or surely I shall shame myself and
him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who
beside your hearths
Can take her place—if echoing me
you cry
'Our house is left unto us desolate'?
But thou, O thou that killest, hadst
thou known,
O thou that stonest, hadst thou under-
stood
The things belonging to thy peace
and ours!
Is there no prophet but the voice that
calls
Doom upon kings, or in the waste
'Repent'?
Is not our own child on the narrow
way,
Who down to those that saunter in
the broad
Cries 'Come up hither,' as a prophet
to us?
Is there no stoning save with flint
and rock?
Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
No desolation but by sword and fire?
Yes, as your moanings witness, and
myself

Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my
loss.
Give me your prayers, for he is past
your prayers,
Not past the living fount of pity in
Heaven.
But I that thought myself long-suffer-
ing, meek,
Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the
words
Have twisted back upon themselves,
and mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud—I
wish'd my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the
world—
Sent like the twelve-divided concubine
To inflame the tribes: but there—
out yonder—earth
Lightens from her own central Hell
—O there
The red fruit of an old idolatry—
The heads of chiefs and princes fall
so fast,
They cling together in the ghastly
sack—
The land all shambles—naked mar-
riages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-mur-
der'd France,
By shores that darken with the gath-
ering wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then?
Was this a time for these to flaunt
their pride?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as
dense as those
Which hid the Holiest from the peo-
ple's eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great
sin from all!
Doubtless our narrow world must
canvass it:
O rather pray for those and pity them,
Who, thro' their own desire accom-
plish'd, bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to
the grave—
Who broke the bond which they
desired to break,
Which else had link'd their race with
times to come—
Who wove coarse webs to snare her
purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daugh-
ter's good—
Poor souls, and knew not what they
did, but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daugh-
ter's death!
May not that earthly chastisement
suffice?
Have not our love and reverence left
them bare?

Will not another take their heritage?
 Will there be children's laughter in
 their hall
 For ever and for ever, or one stone
 Left on another, or is it a light thing
 That I, their guest, their host, their
 ancient friend,
 I made by these the last of all my
 race,
 Must cry to these the last of theirs, as
 cried
 Christ ere His agony to those that
 swore
 Not by the temple but the gold, and
 made
 Their own traditions God, and slew
 the Lord,
 And left their memories a world's
 curse — 'Behold,
 Your house is left unto you deso-
 late'?"

Ended he had not, but she brook'd
 no more:
 Long since her heart had beat remorse-
 lessly,
 Her cramp'd-up sorrow pain'd her, and
 a sense
 Of meanness in her unresisting life.
 Then their eyes vex'd her; for on en-
 tering
 He had cast the curtains of their seat
 aside —
 Black velvet of the costliest — she
 herself
 Had seen to that: fain had she closed
 them now,
 Yet dared not stir to do it, only
 near'd
 Her husband inch by inch, but when
 she laid,
 Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he
 veil'd
 His face with the other, and at once,
 as falls
 A creeper when the prop is broken,
 fell
 The woman shrieking at his feet, and
 swoon'd.
 Then her own people bore along the
 nave
 Her pendent hands, and narrow mea-
 gre face
 Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty
 years:
 And her the Lord of all the landscape
 round
 Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all
 Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd
 out
 Tall and erect, but in the middle
 aisle
 Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded
 ways
 Stumbling across the market to his
 death,

Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and
 seem'd
 Always about to fall, grasping the
 pews
 And oaken finials till he touch'd the
 door;
 Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot
 stood,
 Strode from the porch, tall and erect
 again.

But nevermore did either pass the
 gate
 Save under pall with bearers. In one
 month,
 Thro' weary and yet ever wearier
 hours,
 The childless mother went to seek her
 child;
 And when he felt the silence of his
 house
 About him, and the change and not
 the change,
 And those fixt eyes of painted ances-
 tors
 Staring for ever from their gilded
 walls
 On him their last descendant, his own
 head
 Began to droop, to fall; the man be-
 came
 Imbecile; his one word was "deso-
 late";
 Dead for two years before his death
 was he;
 But when the second Christmas came,
 escaped
 His keepers, and the silence which he
 felt,
 To find a deeper in the narrow
 gloom
 By wife and child; nor wanted at his
 end
 The dark retinue reverencing death
 At golden thresholds; nor from tender
 hearts,
 And those who sorrow'd o'er a van-
 ish'd race,
 Pity, the violet on the tyrant's
 grave.
 Then the great Hall was wholly broken
 down,
 And the broad woodland parcell'd into
 farms;
 And where the two contrived their
 daughter's good,
 Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has
 made his run,
 The hedgehog underneath the plan-
 tain bores,
 The rabbit fondles his own harmless
 face,
 The slow-worm creeps, and the thin
 weasel there
 Follows the mouse, and all is open
 field.

SEA DREAMS.

A city clerk, but gently born and bred;
 His wife, an unknown artist's orphan child —
 One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three years old:
 They, thinking that her clear germander eye
 Droopt in the giant-factoried city-gloom,
 Came, with a month's leave given them, to the sea:
 For which his gains were dock'd, however small:
 Small were his gains, and hard his work; besides,
 Their slender household fortunes (for the man
 Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
 Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep:
 And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
 Would darken, as he cursed his credulousness,
 And that one unctuous mouth which lured him, rogue,
 To buy strange shares in some Peruvian mine.
 Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd a coast,
 All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning cave,
 At close of day; slept, woke, and went the next,
 The Sabbath, pious variers from the church,
 To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer,
 Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
 Announced the coming doom, and fulminated
 Against the scarlet woman and her creed;
 For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd
 "Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if he held
 The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
 Were that great Angel; "Thus with violence
 Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;
 Then comes the close." The gentle-hearted wife
 Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
 He at his own: but when the wordy storm
 Had ended, forth they came and paced the shore,
 Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves,

Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed
 (The sootflake of so many a summer still
 Clung to their fancies) that they saw, the sea.
 So now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff,
 Lingered about the thymy promontories,
 Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
 And rosed in the east: then homeward and to bed:
 Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope,
 Haunting a holy text, and still to that Returning, as the bird returns, at night,
 "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,"
 Said, "Love, forgive him": but he did not speak;
 And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
 Remembering her dear Lord who died for all,
 And musing on the little lives of men,
 And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide
 Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost rocks
 Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild sea-smoke,
 And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell
 In vast sea-cataracts — ever and anon
 Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs
 Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,
 Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd and woke
 The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
 "A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and groaning said,
 "Forgive! How many will say, 'forgive,' and find
 A sort of absolution in the sound
 To hate a little longer! No; the sin
 That neither God nor man can well forgive,
 Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
 Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
 Not first, and third, which are a riper first?
 Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.
 Ah love, there surely lives in man and beast

Something divine to warn them of
 their foes:
 And such a sense, when first I fronted
 him,
 Said, 'Trust him not'; but after,
 when I came
 To know him more, I lost it, knew him
 less;
 Fought with what seem'd my own
 uncharity;
 Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;
 Made more and more allowance for
 his talk;
 Went further, fool! and trusted him
 with all,
 All my poor scrapings from a dozen
 years
 Of dust and deskwork: there is no
 such mine,
 None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing
 gold,
 Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the
 sea roars
 Ruin: a fearful night!"

"Not fearful; fair,"
 Said the good wife, "if every star in
 heaven
 Can make it fair: you do but hear
 the tide.
 Had you ill dreams?"

"O yes," he said, "I dream'd
 Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
 And I from out the boundless outer
 deep
 Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd
 one
 Of those dark caves that run beneath
 the cliffs.
 I thought the motion of the boundless
 deep
 Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved
 upon it
 In darkness: then I saw one lovely star
 Larger and larger. 'What a world,'
 I thought,
 'To live in!' but in moving on I found
 Only the landward exit of the cave,
 Bright with the sun upon the stream
 beyond:
 And near the light a giant woman sat,
 All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
 A pickaxe in her hand: then out I slipt
 Into a land all sun and blossom, trees
 As high as heaven, and every bird
 that sings:
 And here the night-light flickering in
 my eyes
 Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she
 said,
 "Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,
 "And mused upon it, drifting up the
 stream
 In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
 The broken vision; for I dream'd that
 still
 The motion of the great deep bore
 me on,
 And that the woman walk'd upon
 the brink:
 I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd
 her of it:
 'It came,' she said, 'by working in
 the mines.'
 O then to ask her of my shares, I
 thought;
 And ask'd; but not a word; she shook
 her head.
 And then the motion of the current
 ceased,
 And there was rolling thunder; and
 we reach'd
 A mountain, like a wall of burs and
 thorns;
 But she with her strong feet up the
 hill
 Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at
 top
 She pointed seaward: there a fleet of
 glass,
 That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
 Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
 That not one moment ceased to thun-
 der, past
 In sunshine: right across its track
 there lay,
 Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
 Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad
 at first
 To think that in our often-ransack'd
 world
 Still so much gold was left; and then
 I fear'd
 Lest the gay navy there should splin-
 ter on it,
 And fearing waved my arm to warn
 them off;
 An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
 (I thought I could have died to save
 it) near'd,
 Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and
 vanish'd, and I woke,
 I heard the clash so clearly. Now I
 see
 My dream was Life; the woman hon-
 est Work;
 And my poor venture but a fleet of
 glass
 Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to com-
 fort him,
 "You raised your arm, you tumbled
 down and broke
 The glass with little Margaret's medi-
 cine in it;

And, breaking that, you made and
broke your dream :
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband;
"yesterday
I met him suddenly in the street, and
ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my
dream.
Like her, he shook his head. 'Show
me the books!'
He dodged me with a long and loose
account.
'The books, the books!' but he, he
could not wait,
Bound on a matter he of life and
death :
When the great Books (see Daniel
seven and ten)
Were open'd, I should find he meant
me well;
And then began to bloat himself, and
ooze
All over with the fat affectionate smile
That makes the widow lean. 'My
dearest friend,
Have faith, have faith! We live by
faith,' said he;
'And all things work together for the
good
Of those' — it makes me sick to quote
him — last
Gript my hand hard, and with God-
bless-you went.
I stood like one that had received a
blow :
I found a hard friend in his loose ac-
counts,
A loose one in the hard grip of his
hand,
A curse in his God-bless-you : then my
eyes
Pursued him down the street, and far
away,
Among the honest shoulders of the
crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding
knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?"
said the good wife;
"So are we all : but do not call him,
love,
Before you prove him, rogue, and
proved, forgive.
His gain is loss; for he that wrongs
his friend
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears
about
A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and him-
self
The prisoner at the bar, ever con-
demn'd :

And that drags down his life : then
comes what comes
Hereafter : and he meant, he said he
meant,
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant,
you well."

"'With all his conscience and one
eye askew' —
Love, let me quote these lines, that
you may learn
A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of
yours —
'With all his conscience and one eye
askew,
So false, he partly took himself for
true;
Whose pious talk, when most his
heart was dry,
Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round
his eye;
Who, never naming God except for
gain,
So never took that useful name in
vain,
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross
his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe
and fool;
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace
he forged,
And snake-like slimed his victim ere
he gorged;
And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the
rest
Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell
and Heaven,
To spread the Word by which him-
self had thriven.'
How like you this old satire?"

"Nay," she said,
"I loathe it : he had never kindly
heart,
Norever cared to better his own kind,
Who first wrote satire, with no pity
in it.
But will you hear *my* dream, for I
had one
That altogether went to music? Still
It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd
Of that same coast.

— But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor,
lay,
And ever in it a low musical note
Swell'd up and died; and, as it
swell'd, a ridge
Of breaker issued from the belt, and
still

Grew with the growing note, and when
 the note
 Had reach'd a thunderous fullness,
 on those cliffs
 Broke, mixt with awful light (the
 same as that
 Living within the belt) whereby she
 saw
 That all those lines of cliffs were
 cliffs no more,
 But huge cathedral fronts of every
 age,
 Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye
 could see,
 One after one: and then the great
 ridge drew,
 Lessening to the lessening music,
 back,
 And past into the belt and swell'd
 again
 Slowly to music: ever when it broke
 The statues, king or saint, or founder
 fell;
 Then from the gaps and chasms of
 ruin left
 Came men and women in dark clusters
 round,
 Some crying, "Set them up! they shall
 not fall!"
 And others, "Let them lie, for they
 have fall'n."
 And still they strove and wrangled:
 and she grieved
 In her strange dream, she knew not
 why, to find
 Their wildest wailings never out of
 tune
 With that sweet note; and ever as
 their shrieks
 Ran highest up the gamut, that great
 wave
 Returning, while none mark'd it, on
 the crowd
 Broke, mixt with awful light, and
 show'd their eyes
 Glaring, with passionate looks, and
 swept away
 The men of flesh and blood, and men
 of stone,
 To the waste deeps together.
 "Then I fixt
 My wistful eyes on two fair images,
 Both crown'd with stars and high
 among the stars,—
 The Virgin Mother standing with her
 child
 High up on one of those dark min-
 ster-fronts—
 Till she began to totter, and the
 child
 Clung to the mother, and sent out a
 cry
 Which mixt with little Margaret's,
 and I woke,
 And my dream awed me:—well—
 but what are dreams?

Yours came but from the breaking of
 a glass,
 And mine but from the crying of a
 child."

"Child? No!" said he, "but this
 tide's roar, and his,
 Our Boanerges with his threats of
 doom,
 And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms
 (Altho' I grant but little music there)
 Went both to make your dream: but
 if there were
 A music harmonizing our wild cries,
 Sphere-music such as that you
 dream'd about,
 Why, that would make our passions
 far too like
 The discords dear to the musician.
 No—
 One shriek of hate would jar all the
 hymns of heaven:
 True Devils with no ear, they howl
 in tune
 With nothing but the Devil!"

"True' indeed!
 One out of our town, but later by an
 hour
 Here than ourselves, spoke with me
 on the shore;
 While you were running down the
 sands, and made
 The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbe-
 low flap,
 Good man, to please the child. She
 brought strange news.
 Why were you silent when I spoke
 to-night?
 I had set my heart on your forgiving
 him
 Before you knew. We *must* forgive
 the dead."

"Dead! who is dead?"

"The man your eye pursued.
 A little after you had parted with
 him,
 He suddenly dropt dead of heart-
 disease."

"Dead? he? of heart-disease? what
 heart had he
 To die of? dead?"

"Ah, dearest, if there be
 A devil in man, there is an angel too,
 And if he did that wrong you charge
 him with,
 His angel broke his heart. But your
 rough voice
 (You spoke so loud) has roused the
 child again.
 Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not
 sleep

Without her 'little birdie' ? well then,
 sleep,
 And I will sing you, 'birdie.' "

Saying this,
 The woman half turn'd round from
 him she loved,
 Left him one hand, and reaching
 thro' the night
 Her other, found (for it was close
 beside)
 And half-embraced the basket cradle-
 head
 With one soft arm, which, like the
 pliant bough
 That moving moves the nest and
 nestling, sway'd
 The cradle, while she sang this baby
 song.

What does little birdie say
 In her nest at peep of day ?
 Let me fly, says little birdie,
 Mother, let me fly away.
 Birdie, rest a little longer,
 Till the little wings are stronger.
 So she rests a little longer,
 Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
 In her bed at peep of day ?
 Baby says, like little birdie,
 Let me rise and fly away.
 Baby, sleep a little longer,
 Till the little limbs are stronger.
 If she sleeps a little longer,
 Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps: let us too, let all evil,
 sleep.
 He also sleeps — another sleep than
 ours.
 He can do no more wrong: forgive
 him, dear,
 And I shall sleep the sounder !"

Then the man,
 "His deeds yet live, the worst is yet
 to come.
 Yet let your sleep for this one night
 be sound:
 I do forgive him !"

"Thanks, my love," she said,
 "Your own will be the sweeter," and
 they slept.

LUCRETII.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
 Her master cold; for when the morn-
 ing flush
 Of passion and the first embrace had
 died
 Between them, tho' he lov'd her none
 the less,

Yet often when the woman heard his
 foot
 Return from paces in the field, and
 ran
 To greet him with a kiss, the master
 took
 Small notice, or austere, for — his
 mind
 Half buried in some weightier argu-
 ment,
 Or fancy, borne perhaps upon the rise
 And long roll of the Hexameter — he
 past
 To turn and ponder those three hun-
 dred scrolls
 Left by the Teacher, whom he held
 divine.
 She brook'd it not; but wrathful, pet-
 ulant,
 Dreaming some rival, sought and
 found a witch
 Who brew'd the philtre which had
 power, they said,
 To lead an errant passion home again.
 And this, at times, she mingled with
 his drink,
 And this destroy'd him; for the wicked
 broth
 Confused the chemic labor of the
 blood,
 And tickling the brute brain within
 the man's
 Made havoc among those tender cells,
 and check'd
 His power to shape: he loathed him-
 self; and once
 After a tempest woke upon a morn
 That mock'd him with returning calm,
 and cried:

"Storm in the night! for thrice I
 heard the rain
 Rushing; and once the flash of a
 thunderbolt —
 Methought I never saw so fierce a
 fork —
 Struck out the streaming mountain-
 side, and show'd
 A riotous confluence of watercourses
 Blanching and billowing in a hollow
 of it,
 Where all but yester-eve was dusty-
 dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy
 Gods, what dreams!
 For thrice I waken'd after dreams.
 Perchance
 We do but recollect the dreams that
 come
 Just ere the waking: terrible! for it
 seem'd
 A void was made in Nature; all her
 bonds
 Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-
 streams

And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and
make

Another and another frame of things
For ever: that was mine, my dream, I
knew it—

Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot
plies

His function of the woodland: but the
next!

I thought that all the blood by Sylla
shed

Came driving rainlike down again on
earth,

And where it dash'd the reddening
meadow, sprang

No dragon warriors from Cadmean
teeth,

For these I thought my dream would
show to me,

But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
Hired animalisms, vile as those that
made

The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies
worse

Than aught they fable of the quiet
Gods.

And hands they mixt, and yell'd and
round me drove

In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and
saw—

Was it the first beam of my latest
day?

“Then, then, from utter gloom stood
out the breasts,

The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly
a sword

Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down
shamed

At all that beauty; and as I stared, a
fire,

The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me
that I woke.

“Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,
thine,

Because I would not one of thine own
doves,

Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee?
thine,

Forgetful how my rich procæmion
makes

Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

“Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My
tongue

Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of
these

Angers thee most, or angers thee at
all?

Not if thou be'st of those who, far
aloof

From envy, hate and pity, and spite
and scorn,

Live the great life which all our great-
est fain

Would follow, center'd in eternal calm.

“Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like
ourselves

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I
cry to thee

To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender
arms

Round him, and keep him from the
lust of blood

That makes a steaming slaughter-
house of Rome.

“Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant
not her,

Whom all the pines of Ida shook to
see

Slide from that quiet heaven of hers,
and tempt

The Trojan, while his neat-herds were
abroad;

Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter
wept

Her Deity false in human-amorous
tears;

Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,

Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse—

Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow
forth

The all-generating powers and genial
heat

Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the
thick blood

Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs
are glad

Nosing the mother's udder, and the
bird

Makes his heart voice amid the blaze
of flowers:

Which things appear the work of
mighty Gods.

“The Gods! and if I go, *my* work is
left

Unfinish'd—*if* I go. The Gods, who
haunt

The lucid interspace of world and
world,

Where never creeps a cloud, or moves
a wind,

Nor ever falls the least white star of
snow,

Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to
mar

Their sacred everlasting calm! and
 such,
 Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
 Not such, nor all unlike it, man may
 gain
 Letting his own life go. The Gods,
 the Gods!
 If all be atoms, how then should the
 Gods
 Being atomic not be dissoluble,
 Not follow the great law? My master
 held
 That Gods there are, for all men so
 believe.
 I prest my footsteps into his, and
 meant
 Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
 Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
 That Gods there are, and deathless.
 Meant? I meant?
 I have forgotten what I meant: my
 mind
 Stumbles, and all my faculties are
 lamed.

"Look where another of our Gods,
 the Sun,
 Apollo, Delius, or of older use
 All-seeing Hyperion — what you
 will —
 Has mounted yonder; since he never
 sware,
 Except his wrath were wreak'd on
 wretched man,
 That he would only shine among the
 dead
 Hereafter; tales! for never yet on
 earth
 Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roast-
 ing ox
 Moan round the spit — nor knows he
 what he sees;
 King of the East altho' he seem, and
 girt
 With song and flame and fragrance,
 slowly lifts
 His golden feet on those empurpled
 stairs
 That climb into the windy halls of
 heaven:
 And here he glances on an eye new-
 born,
 And gets for greeting but a wail of
 pain;
 And here he stays upon a freezing
 orb
 That fain would gaze upon him to the
 last;
 And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
 And closed by those who mourn a
 friend in vain,
 Not thankful that his troubles are no
 more.
 And me, altho' his fire is on my face
 Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can
 tell

Whether I mean this day to end my-
 self,
 Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
 That men like soldiers may not quit
 the post
 Allotted by the Gods: but he that
 holds
 The Gods are careless, wherefore need
 he care
 Greatly for them, nor rather plunge
 at once,
 Being troubled, wholly out of sight,
 and sink
 Past earthquake — ay, and gout and
 stone, that break
 Body toward death, and palsy, death-
 in-life,
 And wretched age — and worst disease
 of all,
 These prodigies of myriad naked-
 nesses,
 And twisted shapes of lust, unspeak-
 able,
 Abominable, strangers at my hearth
 Not welcome, harpies miring every
 dish,
 The phantom husks of something
 foully done,
 And fleeting thro' the boundless uni-
 verse,
 And blasting the long quiet of my
 breast
 With animal heat and dire insanity?

"How should the mind, except it
 loved them, clasp
 These idols to herself? or do they fly
 Now thinner, and now thicker, like
 the flakes
 In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-
 force
 Of multitude, as crowds that in an
 hour
 Of civic tumult jam the doors, and
 bear
 The keepers down, and throng, their
 rags and they
 The basest, far into that council-hall
 Where sit the best and stateliest of
 the land?

"Can I not fling this horror off me
 again,
 Seeing with how great ease Nature
 can smile,
 Balmier and nobler from her bath of
 storm,
 At random ravage? and how easily
 The mountain there has cast his
 cloudy slough,
 Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
 A mountain o'er a mountain, — ay,
 and within
 All hollow as the hopes and fears of
 men?

"But who was he, that in the garden snared
 Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
 To laugh at—more to laugh at in
 myself—
 Nor look! what is it? there? yon
 arbutus
 Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
 Strikes through the wood, sets all the
 tops quivering—
 The mountain quickens into Nymph
 and Faun;
 And here an Oread—how the sun
 delights
 To glance and shift about her slippery
 sides,
 And rosy knees and supple rounded-
 ness,
 And budded bosom-peaks— who this
 way runs
 Before the rest— A satyr, a satyr, see,
 Follows; but him I proved impossible;
 Twy-natured is no nature: yet he
 draws
 Nearer and nearer, and I scan him
 now
 Beastlier than any phantom of his
 kind
 That ever butted his rough brother-
 brute
 For lust or lusty blood or provender:
 I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and
 she
 Loathes him as well; such a precipi-
 tate heel,
 Fledged as it were with Mercury's
 ankle-wing,
 Whirls her to me: but will she fling
 herself,
 Shameless upon me? Catch her,
 goat-foot: nay,
 Hide, hide them, million-myrtled
 wilderness,
 And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide!
 do I wish—
 What?— that the bush were leafless?
 or to whelm
 All of them in one massacre? O ye
 Gods,
 I know you careless, yet, behold, to
 you
 From childly wont and ancient use I
 call—
 I thought I lived securely as your-
 selves—
 No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-
 spite,
 No madness of ambition, avarice,
 none:
 No larger feast than under plane or
 pine
 With neighbors laid along the grass,
 to take
 Only such cups as left us friendly-
 warm,
 Affirming each his own philosophy—

Nothing to mar the sober majesties
 Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
 But now it seems some unseen mon-
 ster lays
 His vast and filthy hands upon my
 will,
 Wrenching it backward into his; and
 spoils
 My bliss in being; and it was not
 great;
 For save when shutting reasons up in
 rhythm,
 Or Heliconian honey in living words,
 To make a truth less harsh, I often
 grew
 Tired of so much within our little
 life,
 Or of so little in our little life—
 Poor little life that toddles half an
 hour
 Crown'd with a flower or two, and
 there an end—
 And since the nobler pleasure seems
 to fade,
 Why should I, beastlike as I find my-
 self,
 Not manlike end myself?— our privi-
 lege—
 What beast has heart to do it? And
 what man,
 What Roman would be dragg'd in tri-
 umph thus?
 Not I; not he, who bears one name
 with her
 Whose death-blow struck the dateless
 doom of kings,
 When, brooking not the Tarquin in
 her veins,
 She made her blood in sight of Col-
 latine
 And all his peers, flushing the guiltless
 air,
 Spout from the maiden fountain in
 her heart.
 And from it sprang the Common-
 wealth, which breaks
 As I am breaking now!

 "And therefore now
 Let her, that is the womb and tomb
 of all,
 Great Nature, take, and forcing far
 apart
 Those blind beginnings that have made
 me man,
 Dash them anew together at her will
 Thro' all her cycles— into man once
 more,
 Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent
 flower:
 But till this cosmic order everywhere
 Shatter'd into one earthquake in one
 day
 Cracks all to pieces,— and that hour
 perhaps
 Is not so far when momentary man

Shall seem no more a something to himself,
 But he, his hopes and hates, his homes
 and fanes,
 And even his bones long laid within
 the grave,
 The very sides of the grave itself
 shall pass,
 Vanishing, atom and void, atom and
 void,
 Into the unseen for ever,—till that
 hour,
 My golden work in which I told a truth
 That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
 And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake,
 and plucks
 The mortal soul from out immortal
 hell,
 Shall stand: ay, surely: then it fails
 at last
 And perishes as I must; for O Thou,
 Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
 Yearn'd after by the wisest of the
 wise,
 Who fail to find thee, being as thou
 art
 Without one pleasure and without one
 pain,
 Howbeit I know thou surely must be
 mine
 Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
 I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
 How roughly men may woo thee so
 they win—
 Thus—thus: the soul flies out and
 dies in the air."

With that he drove the knife into
 his side:
 She heard him raging, heard him fall;
 ran in,
 Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon
 herself
 As having fail'd in duty to him,
 shriek'd
 That she but meant to win him back,
 fell on him,
 Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd: he an-
 swer'd, "Care not thou!
 Thy duty? What is duty? Fare
 thee well!"

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1832.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation,
 Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a
 mighty nation,
 Mourning when their leaders fall,
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom
 we deplore?
 Here, in streaming London's central
 roar.
 Let the sound of those he wrought for,
 And the feet of those he fought for,
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
 As fits an universal woe,
 Let the long long procession go,
 And let the sorrowing crowd about it
 grow,
 And let the mournful martial music
 blow;
 The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
 Remembering all his greatness in the
 Past.
 No more in soldier fashion will he
 greet
 With lifted hand the gazer in the
 street.
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is
 mute:
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring
 blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, res-
 olute,
 Whole in himself, a common good.
 Mourn for the man of amplest influ-
 ence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest yet, with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war,
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good gray head which all men knew,
 O voice from which their omens all
 men drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fall'n at length that tower of
 strength
 Which stood four-square to all the
 winds that blew!
 Such was he whom we deplore.
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's victor will
 be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done:
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be toll'd.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold
 That shines over city and river,

There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be toll'd:
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds:
 Bright let it be with its blazon'd
 deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be toll'd:
 And a deeper knell in the heart be
 knoll'd;
 And the sound of the sorrowing an-
 them roll'd
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
 And the volleying cannon thunder his
 loss;
 He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 His captain's-ear has heard them
 boom
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:
 When he with those deep voices
 wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from
 shame;
 With those deep voices our dead cap-
 tain taught
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim
 In that dread sound to the great name
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-attemper'd frame.
 O civic muse, to such a name,
 To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an hon-
 or'd guest,
 With banner and with music, with
 soldier and with priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking
 on my rest?
 Mighty Seaman, this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 Thine island loves thee well, thou
 famous man,
 The greatest sailor since our world
 began.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea;
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;
 O give him welcome, this is he
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee;
 For this is England's greatest son,
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun:
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
 And underneath another sun,

Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon drew
 The treble works, the vast designs
 Of his labor'd rampart-lines,
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadow-
 ing wings,
 And barking for the thrones of
 kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron
 crown
 On that loud Sabbath shook the
 spoiler down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd them-
 selves away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and
 overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven
 guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at
 all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by
 thine!
 And thro' the centuries let a people's
 voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human
 fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to
 him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

VII.

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams
 forget,

Confused by brainless mobs and law-
 less Powers;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and
 roughly set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming
 showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay
 the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and
 regret
 To those great men who fought, and
 kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute
 control;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,
 the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England
 whole,
 And save the one true seed of free-
 dom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient
 throne,
 That sober freedom out of which
 there springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate
 kings;
 For, saving that, ye help to save man-
 kind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into
 dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march
 of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and
 crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful over-
 trust.
 Remember him who led your hosts;
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward
 wall;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever; and whatever tempests
 lour
 For ever silent; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man
 who spoke;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the
 hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for
 power;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor
 flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high
 and low;
 Whose life was work, whose language
 rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life;
 Who never spoke against a foe;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one
 rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on
 the right:
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred
 named;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke;

Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open
 hands
 Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her
 horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state.
 Not once or twice in our rough island-
 story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory:
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle
 bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-
 story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory:
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and
 hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light
 has won
 His path upward, and prevail'd,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
 scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-
 lands
 To which our God Himself is moon
 and sun.
 Such was he: his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind en-
 dure,
 Let his great example stand
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the states-
 man pure:
 Till in all lands and thro' all human
 story
 The path of duty be the way to glory:
 And let the land whose hearts he
 saved from shame
 For many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illuminated cities
 flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to
 him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet un moulded tongue
 Far on in summers that we shall not
 see:

Peace, it is a day of pain
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung:
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one, upon whose hand and heart
 and brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe
 hung.
 Ours the pain, be his the gain!
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere;
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane:
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are
 we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so
 true
 There must be other nobler work to
 do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the
 hill
 And break the shore, and evermore
 Make and break, and work their will;
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads
 roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul?
 On God and Godlike men we build our
 trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the
 people's ears:
 The dark crowd moves, and there are
 sobs and tears:
 The black earth yawns: the mortal
 disappears;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
 He is gone who seem'd so great. —
 Gone; but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave
 him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him.
 God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY,

1852.

My Lords, we heard you speak: you
 told us all

That England's honest censure went
 too far;
 That our free press should cease to
 brawl,
 Not sting the fiery Frenchman into
 war.
 It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
 To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing,
 into words.

We love not this French God, the
 child of Hell,
 Wild War, who breaks the converse
 of the wise;
 But though we love kind Peace so
 well,
 We dare not ev'n by silence sanction
 lies.
 It might be safe our censures to with-
 draw;
 And yet, my Lords, not well: there is
 a higher law.
 As long as we remain, we must speak
 free,
 Tho' all the storm of Europe on us
 break;
 No little German state are we,
 But the one voice in Europe: we
 must speak;
 That if to-night our greatness were
 struck dead,
 There might be left some record of
 the things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be
 bold.
 Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant
 o'er.
 Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
 On her and us and ours for evermore.
 What! have we fought for Freedom
 from our prime,
 At last to dodge and palter with a
 public crime?
 Shall we fear *him*? our own we never
 fear'd.
 From our first Charles by force we
 wrung our claims.
 Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
 We flung the burden of the second
 James.
 I say, we *never* feared! and as for these,
 We broke them on the land, we drove
 them on the seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the
 people muse
 In doubt if you be of our Barons'
 breed —
 Were those your sires who fought at
 Lewes?
 Is this the manly strain of Runny-
 mede?
 O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
 Would lisp in honey'd whispers of
 this monstrous fraud!

We feel, at least, that silence here
 were sin,
 Not ours the fault if we have feeble
 hosts —

If easy patrons of their kin

Have left the last free race with
 naked coasts!

They knew the precious things they
 had to guard:

For us, we will not spare the tyrant
 one hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester
 may bawl,

What England was, shall her true
 sons forget?

We are not cotton-spinners all,

But some love England and her
 honor yet.

And these in our Thermopylæ shall
 stand,

And hold against the world this honor
 of the land.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,

Half a league onward,

All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!

Charge for the guns," he said:

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

II.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"

Was there a man dismay'd?

Not tho' the soldier knew

Some one had blunder'd:

Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die:

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,

Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them

Volley'd and thunder'd;

Storm'd at with shot and shell,

Boldly they rode and well,

Into the jaws of Death,

Into the mouth of Hell

Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,

Flash'd as they turn'd in air

Sabring the gunners there,

Charging an army, while

All the world wonder'd:

Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right thro' the line they broke;

Cossack and Russian

Reel'd from the sabre-stroke

Shatter'd and sunder'd.

Then they rode back, but not,

Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,

Cannon to left of them,

Cannon behind them

Volley'd and thunder'd;

Storm'd at with shot and shell,

While horse and hero fell,

They that had fought so well

Came thro' the jaws of Death,

Back from the mouth of Hell,

All that was left of them,

Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade?

O the wild charge they made!

All the world wonder'd.

Honor the charge they made!

Honor the Light Brigade,

Noble six hundred!

ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and
 sweet,

In this wide hall with earth's inven-
 tion stored,

And praise the invisible universal
 Lord,

Who lets once more in peace the na-
 tions meet,

Where Science, Art, and Labor
 have outpour'd

Their myriad horns of plenty at our
 feet.

II.

O silent father of our Kings to be

Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,

For this, for all, we weep our thanks
 to thee!

III.

The world-compelling plan was
 thine, —

And, lo! the long laborious miles

Of Palace; lo! the giant aisles,

Rich in model and design;

Harvest-tool and husbandry,

Loom and wheel and enginery,

Secrets of the sullen mine,

Steel and gold, and corn and wine,

Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,

Sunny tokens of the Line,

Polar marvels, and a feast

Of wonder, out of West and East,
 And shapes and hues of Art divine!
 All of beauty, all of use,
 That one fair planet can produce,
 Brought from under every star,
 Blown from over every main,
 And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
 The works of peace with works of war.

IV.

Is the goal so far away?
 Far, how far no tongue can say,
 Let us dream our dream to-day.

V.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who
 reign,
 From growing commerce loose her
 latest chain,
 And let the fair white-wing'd peace-
 maker fly
 To happy havens under all the sky,
 And mix the seasons and the golden
 hours;
 Till each man find his own in all
 men's good,
 And all men work in noble brother-
 hood,
 Breaking their mailed fleets and
 armed towers,
 And ruling by obeying Nature's
 powers,
 And gathering all the fruits of earth
 And crown'd with all her flow-
 ers.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the
 sea, Alexandra!
 Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
 But all of us Danes in our welcome
 of thee, Alexandra!
 Welcome her, thunders of fort and of
 fleet!
 Welcome her, thundering cheer of the
 street!
 Welcome her, all things youthful and
 sweet,
 Scatter the blossom under her feet!
 Break, happy land, into earlier flow-
 ers!
 Make music, O bird, in the new-budded
 bowers!
 Blazon your mottoes of blessing and
 prayer!
 Welcome her, welcome her, all that is
 ours!
 Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!
 Flags, flutter out upon turrets and
 towers!
 Flames, on the windy headland
 flare!

Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!
 Clash, ye bells, in the merry March
 air!

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!
 Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and
 higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire!
 Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
 Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the
 strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the
 land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's
 desire,

The sea-kings' daughter as happy as
 fair,

Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
 Bride of the heir of the kings of the
 sea—

O joy to the people and joy to the
 throne,

Come to us, love us and make us your
 own:

For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
 Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
 We are each all Dane in our welcome
 of thee, Alexandra!

A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL
HIGHNESS MARIE ALEX-
ANDROVNA, DUCHESS OF
EDINBURGH.

MARCH 7, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove
 for power—

Whose will is lord thro' all his
 world-domain—

Who made the serf a man, and burst
 his chain—

Has given our Prince his own imperial
 Flower,

Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a
 people's pride,

To Britain, when her flowers begin
 to blow!

From love to love, from home to
 home you go,

From mother unto mother, stately
 bride,

Marie Alexandrovna!

II.

The golden news along the steppes is
 blown,

And at thy name the Tartar tents
 are stirr'd;

Elburz and all the Caucasus have
 heard;

And all the sultry palms of India
 known,

Alexandrovna.

The voices of our universal sea
 On capes of Afric as on cliffs of
 Kent,
 The Maoris and that Isle of Conti-
 nent,
 And loyal pines of Canada murmur
 thee,

Marie Alexandrovna !

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty
 life!—
 Yet Harold's England fell to Nor-
 man swords;
 Yet thine own land has bow'd to
 Tartar hordes
 Since English Harold gave its throne
 a wife,

Alexandrovna !

For thrones and peoples are as waifs
 that swing,
 And float or fall, in endless ebb and
 flow;
 But who love best have best the
 grace to know
 That Love by right divine is deathless
 king,

Marie Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger
 land,

Where men are bold and strongly
 say their say ;—
 See, empire upon empire smiles to-
 day,
 As thou with thy young lover hand in
 hand,

Alexandrovna !

So now thy fuller life is in the west,
 Whose hand at home was gracious
 to thy poor :
 Thy name was blest within the nar-
 row door ;
 Here also, Marie, shall thy name be
 blest,

Marie Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame
 again ?

Or at thy coming, Princess, every-
 where,

The blue heaven break, and some
 diviner air

Breathe thro' the world and change
 the hearts of men,

Alexandrovna !

But hearts that change not, love that
 cannot cease,

And peace be yours, the peace of
 soul in soul !

And howsoever this wild world may
 roll,

Between your people's truth and man-
 ful peace,

Alfred — Alexandrovna !

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne ?
 Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
 And Willy's wife has written : she never was over-wise,
 Never the wife for Willy : he wouldn't take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,
 Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
 Pretty enough, very pretty ! but I was against it for one.
 Eh ! — but he wouldn't hear me — and Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock ;
 Never a man could fling him : for Willy stood like a rock.
 " Here's a leg for a babe of a week ! " says doctor ; and he would be bound,
 There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue
 I ought to have gone before him : I wonder he went so young.
 I cannot cry for him, Annie : I have not long to stay ;
 Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am hard and cold;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old:
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time: I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar!
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been!
But soiling another, Annie, will never make one's self clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an evening late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrupt the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt: there past by the gate of the farm,
Willy, — he didn't see me, — and Jenny hung on his arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how;
Ah, there's no fool like the old one — it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking curtesy and went.
And I said, "Let us part: in a hundred years it'll all be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name."

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine:
"Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill;
But marry me out of hand: we two shall be happy still."

XIV.

"Marry you, Willy!" said I, "but I needs must speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind."
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, "No, love, no;"
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death.
There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain :
I look'd at the still little body — his trouble had all been in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn :
But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay :
Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would have his way :
Never jealous — not he : we had many a happy year ;
And he died, and I could not weep — my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died :
I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget :
But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you :
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too — they sing to their team :
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed —
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive ;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and ten ;
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve :
And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ;
I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had ;
And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease ;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
And happy has been my life; but I would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour, —
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vexed?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie: thank God that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now: you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän?
Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse: whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän:
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle: but I beänt a fool:
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-goin' to breäk my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's nawways true:
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere,
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' ere o' my bed.
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," a said,
An' a tow'd ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy Marris's barne.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squoire an' choorch an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coom'd to's choorch afoor moy Sally wur deäd,
An' 'eerd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock¹ ower my 'eäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.
Mowt a bean, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understand;
I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

¹ Cockchafer.

VII.

But Parson a cooms an' a goos, an' a says it eäsy an' freeä
 "The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," says 'eä.
 I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summum said it in 'aäste:
 But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then;
 Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd 'um mysen;
 Moäst loike a butter-bump,¹ fur I 'eerd 'um aboot an' aboot,
 But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved an' rembled 'um oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
 Doon i' the wold 'enemies² afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.
 Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner 'ed shot 'um as deäd as a naäil.
 Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize — but git ma my aäle.

X.

Dubbut loook at the waäste: theer warn't not feeäd for a cow;
 Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' loook at it now —
 Warnt worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o' feeäd,
 Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon i' seeäd.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
 Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,
 If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let me aloän,
 Meä, wi' haäte oonderd haäcre o' Squire's an' lond o' my oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty know what a's doing a-taäkin' o' meä?
 I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a peä;
 An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear a' dear!
 And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a 'aäpoth o' sense,
 Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a niver mended a fence:
 But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now
 Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälms to plow!

XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoiles when they seeäs ma a passin' boy,
 Says to thessén naw doubt "what a man a beä sewer-loy!"
 Fur they knows what I beän to Squire sin fust a coom'd to the 'All;
 I done moy duty by Squire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

XV.

Squire's i' Lunnon, an' summum I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
 For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot muddles ma quoit;
 Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give it to Joänes,
 Naw, nor a moänt to Robins — a niver rembles the stoäns.

XVI.

But summum 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
 Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Divil's oän teäm.
 Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they says is sweet,
 But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn' abeär to see it.

¹ Bittern.² Anemones.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn't bring ma the aäle?
 Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle;
 I weänt brëäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy;
 Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy?
 Proputty, proputty, proputty — that's what I 'ears 'em saäy.
 Proputty, proputty, proputty — Sam, thou's an ass for thy paaïns:
 Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braaïns.

II.

Woä — theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam: yon's parson's 'ouse —
 Dosn't thou know that a man mun be cäther a man or a mouse?
 Time to think on it then; for thou'll be twenty to weeäk.¹
 Proputty, proputty — woä then woä — let ma 'ear mysén speäk.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän a-talkin' o' thee;
 Thou's beän talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it me.
 Thou'll not marry for munny — thou's sweet upo' parson's lass —
 Noä — thou'll marry for luvv — an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her todaäy goä by — Saäint's daäy — they was ringin' the bells.
 She's a beauty thou thinks — an' soä is scoors o' gells,
 Them as 'as munny an' all — wot's a beauty? — the flower as blaws.
 But proputty, proputty sticks, an' proputty, proputty graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt:² taäke time: I knaws what maäkes tha sa mad.
 Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?
 But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this:
 "Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is!"

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war: an' thy muther coom to 'and,
 Wi' lots o' munny laaïd by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.
 Maäybe she warn't a beauty — I niver giv it a thowt —
 But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deäd,
 Mun be a guyness, lad, or summut, and addle³ her breäð:
 Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git naw 'igher;
 An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' Varsity debt,
 Stook to his taaïl they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.
 An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend 'im a shove,
 Woorse nor a far-welter'd⁴ yowe: fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

¹ This week.² Obstinate.³ Earn.⁴ Or fow-welter'd, — said of a sheep lying on its back in the furrow.

IX.

Luvv ? what's luvv ? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,
 Maakin' 'em goä together as they've good right to do.
 Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laaid by ?
 Naäy — fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it : reäson why.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the lass,
 Cooms of a gentleman burn : an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.
 Woä then, proputt, wiltha ? — an ass as near as mays nowt¹ —
 Woä then, wiltha ? dangtha ! — the bees is as fell as owt.²

XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd, lad, out o' the fence !
 Gentleman burn ! what's gentleman burn ? is it shillins an' pence ?
 Proputt, proputt's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest
 If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, fur them as 'as it's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
 Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes their regular meäls.
 Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
 Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy lot,
 Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny was got.
 Feyther 'ad ammost nowt ; leastways 'is munny was 'id.
 But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an' 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Loook thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck cooms out by the 'ill !
 Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs oop to the mill ;
 An' I'll run oop to the brig, an' that thou'll live to see ;
 And if thou marries a good un I'll leäve the land to thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick ;
 But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave the land to Dick. —
 Coom oop, proputt, proputt — that's what I 'ears 'im saay —
 Proputt, proputt, proputt — canter an' canter awaäy

¹ Makes nothing.² The flies are as fierce as anything.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
 In lands of palm and southern pine ;
 In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
 Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbïa show'd
 In ruin, by the mountain road ;
 How like a gem, beneath, the city
 Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
 The torrent vineyard streaming fell
 To meet the sun and sunny waters,
 That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
 By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
 Where, here and there, on sandy
 beaches
 A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
 Yet present in his natal grove,
 Now watching high on mountain
 cornice,
 And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;
 Till, in a narrow street and dim,
 I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
 And drank, and loyally drank to
 him.

Nor knew he well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast;
But distant color, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom,
The glory!

A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splügen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold:
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nursing of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

JANUARY, 1854.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy:
Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-councils
Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,
Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand ;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances ;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valor and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;
But when the wreath of March has blossom'd,
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear ;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

WILL.

I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,

In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle in the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away ;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee :
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men and thou wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
The Master was far away :
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day ;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
 In courtesy like to thee:
 Two dead men have I loved
 With a love that ever will be:
 Three dead men have I loved, and
 thou art last of the three.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
 I cast to earth a seed.
 Up there came a flower,
 The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
 Thro' my garden-bower,
 And muttering discontent
 Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
 It wore a crown of light,
 But thieves from o'er the wall
 Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
 By every town and tower,
 Till all the people cried,
 "Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
 He that runs may read.
 Most can raise the flowers now,
 For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
 And some are poor indeed;
 And now again the people
 Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
 Where yon broad water sweetly,
 slowly glides.
 It sees itself from thatch to base
 Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to
 die!
 Her quiet dream of life this hour
 may cease.
 Her peaceful being slowly passes by
 To some more perfect peace.

THE ISLET.

"WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we
 go,
 For a score of sweet little summers or
 so?"

The sweet little wife of the singer
 said,
 On the day that follow'd the day she
 was wed,
 "Whither, O whither, love, shall we
 go?"
 And the singer shaking his curly
 head
 Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
 There at his right with a sudden
 crash,
 Singing, "And shall it be over the
 seas
 With a crew that is neither rude nor
 rash,
 But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,
 In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,
 With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
 To a sweet little Eden on earth that I
 know,
 A mountain islet pointed and peak'd;
 Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
 Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
 Fairly-delicate palaces shine
 Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
 And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd
 With many a rivulet high against the
 Sun
 The facets of the glorious mountain
 flash
 Above the valleys of palm and
 pine."

"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

"No, no, no!
 For in all that exquisite isle, my
 dear,
 There is but one bird with a musical
 throat,
 And his compass is but of a single
 note,
 That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not! mock me not! love,
 let us go."

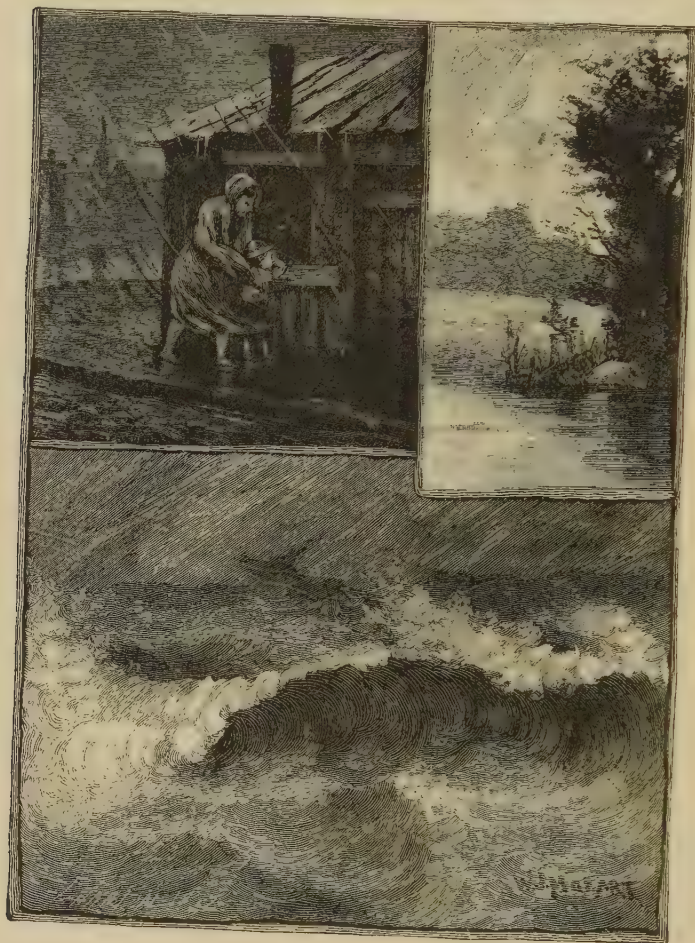
"No, love, no.
 For the bud ever breaks into bloom
 on the tree,
 And a storm never wakes on the lonely
 sea,
 And a worm is there in the lonely
 wood,
 That pierces the liver and blackens
 the blood;
 And makes it a sorrow to be."

THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
 And reach'd the ship and caught the
 rope,
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and
 proud,
 I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
 In caves about the dreary bay,
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall
 play."



*"The sands and yeasty surges mix
 In caves about the dreary bay."*

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
 To those that stay and those that
 roam,
 But I will nevermore endure
 To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
 My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame';

My father raves of death and wreck,
 They are all to blame, they are all
 to blame.

"God help me! save I take my part
 Of danger on the roaring sea,
 A devil rises in my heart,
 Far worse than any death to me."

CHILD-SONGS.

I.

THE CITY CHILD.

DAINTY little maiden, whither would
you wander?

Whither from this pretty home, the
home where mother dwells?

"Far and far away," said the dainty
little maiden,

"All among the gardens, auriculas,
anemones,

Roses and lilies and Canterbury-
bells."

Dainty little maiden, whither would
you wander?

Whither from this pretty house,
this city-house of ours?

"Far and far away," said the dainty
little maiden,

"All among the meadows, the clover
and the clematis,

Daisies and kingcups and honey-
suckle-flowers."

II.

MINNIE AND WINNIE.

MINNIE and Winnie

Slept in a shell.

Sleep, little ladies!

And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,

Silver without;

Sounds of the great sea

Wander'd about.

Sleep, little ladies!

Wake not soon!

Echo on echo

Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars

Peep'd into the shell.

"What are they dreaming of?

Who can tell?"

Started a green linnet

Out of the croft;

Wake, little ladies,

The sun is aloft!

THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,
And with it a spiteful letter.

My name in song has done him much
wrong,

For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages?
I think not much of yours or of mine,
I hear the roll of the ages.

Rhymes and rhymes in the range of
the times!

Are mine for the moment stronger?
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,
I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as
brief;

What room is left for a hater?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener
leaf,

For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is that your cry?

And men will live to see it.

Well—if it be so—so it is, you know;
And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a summer leaf,

But this is the time of hollies.

O hollies and ivies and evergreens,

How I hate the spites and the
follies!

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

AU God! the petty fools of rhyme
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars:

Who hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite
And pinch their brethren in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite:

And strain to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and cannot
hear

The sullen Lethe rolling doom
On them and theirs and all things
here:

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state
Than if the crowned Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great:

And I too, talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,

For on them brake the sudden foe;
So thick they died the people cried,
"The Gods are moved against the
land."

The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:
"Help us from famine
And plague and strife!
What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life."

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a furrow scathed with
flame:
And ever and aye the Priesthood
moan'd,
Till at last it seem'd that an answer
came.
"The King is happy
In child and wife;
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years in-
creased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
"The Gods have answer'd:
We give them the boy."

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;

The mother said, "They have taken
the child
To spill his blood and heal the
land:
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the
lea:
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on
brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
"O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for
me."
The King was shaken with holy fear;
"The Gods," he said, "would have
chosen well;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!"
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won:
"We have his dearest,
His only son!"

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the
blow
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no!"
He caught her away with a sudden
cry;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "*I* am his dearest, *I*—
I am his dearest!" rush'd on the
knife.
And the Priest was happy,
"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the wife!"

WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky:
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains —
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns ?

Is not the Vision He ? tho' He be not that which He seems ?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee : thyself art the reason why ;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel " I am I " ?

Glory about thee, without thee ; and thou fulfillest thy doom
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet —
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all, says the fool ;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see ;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision — were it not He ?

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

I.

THE voice and the Peak
Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones
of dawn !

II.

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

III.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all ?
" I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave for I fall.

IV.

" A thousand voices go
To North, South, East, and West ;
They leave the heights and are
troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

V.

" The fields are fair, beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom ;
But they — they feel the desire of the
deep —
Fall, and follow their doom.

VI.

" The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the
deep ;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep."

VII.

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the
star
Pass, and are found no more.

VIII.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire ;
The Peak is high, and the stars are
high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

IX.

A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height !
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

X.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones
of dawn !

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
 I pluck you out of the crannies,
 I hold you here, root and all, in my
 hand,
 Little flower — but *if* I could under-
 stand
 What you are, root and all, and all in
 all,
 I should know what God and man is.

A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time
 himself
 Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-
 more
 Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of
 life
 Shoots to the fall — take this and pray
 that he

Who wrote it, honoring your sweet
 faith in him,
 May trust himself; and after praise
 and scorn,
 As one who feels the immeasurable
 world,
 Attain the wise indifference of the
 wise;
 And after Autumn past — if left to
 pass
 His autumn into seeming-leaffless
 days —
 Draw toward the long frost and long-
 est night,
 Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the
 fruit
 Which in our winter woodland looks
 a flower.¹

¹ The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Euonymus Europæus*).

EXPERIMENTS.

BOÄDICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries
 Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,
 Far in the East Boädiceä, standing loftily charioted,
 Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
 Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne,
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

“They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populates,
 Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating?
 Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated?
 Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
 Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering?
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable,
 Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcass a skeleton,
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in it,
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis be propitiated.
 Lo their colony half-defended! low their colony, Cámulodúne!
 There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary.
 There the hive of Roman liars worship a gluttonous emperor-idiot.
 Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cássivëlaúin!

“Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, O Coritanian!
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catieuchlanian, Trinobant.
 These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard ærially,
 Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred,
 Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies.
 Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men;
 Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the reflux estuary;
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering —
 There was one who watch'd and told me — down their statue of Victory fell.
 Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo the colony Cámulodúne,
 Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful?
 Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

“Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
 While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,

There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,
'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets!
Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee,
Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet!
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,
Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,
Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,
Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God.'
So they chanted: how shall Britain light upon auguries happier?
So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Icenian, Catieuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
Me the wife of rich Prasútagus, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators!
See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Cámulodúne!
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringleted Britoness —
Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
Shout Icenian, Catieuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,
Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Cánobelíne!
There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
There they dwelt and there they rioted; there — there — they dwell no more.
Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,
Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,
Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,
Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out,
Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us."

So the Queen Boádicéa, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters in her fierce volubility.
Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments,
Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the roaring breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.
So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.
Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary,
Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, Cámulodúne.

IN QUANTITY.

ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

THESE lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer!
No — but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.
When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England?
When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon?
Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,
Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmonies,
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyræan
 Rings to the roar of an angel on-set—
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
 Where some refulgent sunset of India
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods
 Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Hendecasyllabics.

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,
 Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
 Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
 All composed in a metre of Catullus
 All in quantity, careful of my motion,
 Like the skater on ice that hardly bears him,
 Lest I fall unawares before the people,
 Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
 Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
 Thro' this metrification of Catullus,
 They should speak to me not without a welcome,
 All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
 Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
 So fantastical is the dainty metre.
 Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor believe me
 Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers,
 O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—
 Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—

As some rare little rose, a piece of in-most
 Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
 Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK VERSE.

So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd applause;
 Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
 And each beside his chariot bound his own;
 And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
 In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
 And bread from out the houses brought, and heap'd
 Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
 Roll'd the rich vapor far into the heaven.
 And these all night upon the bridge¹ of war
 Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed:
 As when in heaven the stars about the moon
 Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
 And every height comes out, and jutting peak
 And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
 Break open to their highest, and all the stars
 Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart:
 So many a fire between the ships and stream
 Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
 A thousand on the plain; and close by each
 Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
 And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds,
 Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn. *Iliad* VIII. 542-561.

¹ Or ridge.

THE WINDOW ;
OR, THE SONG OF THE WRENS.

Four years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as "Orpheus with his lute," and I drest up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

December, 1870.

A. TENNYSON.

THE WINDOW.

ON THE HILL.

The lights and shadows fly !
Yonder it brightens and darkens down
on the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's
eye!

Oh is it the brook, or a pool, or her
window pane,

When the winds are up in the
morning ?

Clouds that are racing above,
And winds and lights and shadows
that cannot be still,

All running on one way to the home
of my love,

You are all running on, and I stand
on the slope of the hill,

And the winds are up in the morn-
ing !

Follow, follow the chase !

And my thoughts are as quick and as
quick, ever on, on, on.

O lights, are you flying over her
sweet little face ?

And my heart is there before you are
come, and gone,

When the winds are up in the
morning !

Follow them down the slope !

And I follow them down to the window-
pane of my dear,

And it brightens and darkens and
brightens like my hope,

And it darkens and brightens and
darkens like my fear,

And the winds are up in the
morning.

AT THE WINDOW.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Clasp her window, trail and twine !

Rose, rose and clematis,

Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,
Kiss, kiss ; and make her a bower

All of flowers, and drop me a flower,
Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine ?

Rose, rose and clematis,
Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,
Kiss, kiss — and out of her bower
All of flowers, a flower, a flower,
Drop, a flower.

GONE.

Gone !

Gone, till the end of the year,
Gone, and the light gone with her, and
left me in shadow here !

Gone — flitted away,
Taken the stars from the night and
the sun from the day !

Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a
storm in the air !

Flown to the east or the west, flitted
I know not where !

Down in the south is a flash and a
groan : she is there ! she is
there !

WINTER.

The frost is here,
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here
And has bitten the heel of the going
year.

Bite, frost, bite !

You roll up away from the light
The blue wood-louse, and the plump
dormouse,

And the bees are still'd, and the flies
are kill'd,

And you bite far into the heart of the
house,

But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite !

The woods are all the searer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the
earth,
But not into mine.

SPRING.

Birds' love and birds' song
Flying here and there,

Birds' song and birds' love,
 And you with gold for hair!
 Birds' song and birds' love,
 Passing with the weather,
 Men's song and men's love,
 To love once and for ever.

Men's love and birds' love,
 And women's love and men's!
 And you my wren with a crown of
 gold,
 You my queen of the wrens!
 You the queen of the wrens —
 We'll be birds of a feather,
 I'll be King of the Queen of the
 wrens,
 And all in a nest together.

THE LETTER.

Where is another sweet as my sweet,
 Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy?
 Fine little hands, fine little feet —
 Dewy blue eye.
 Shall I write to her? shall I go?
 Ask her to marry me by and by?
 Somebody said that she'd say no;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face?
 Ay or no, from shy of the shy?
 Go, little letter, apace, apace,
 Fly;
 Fly to the light in the valley below —
 Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye:
 Somebody said that she'd say no;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

NO ANSWER.

The mist and the rain, the mist and
 the rain!
 Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?
 And never a glimpse of her window
 pane!
 And I may die but the grass will
 grow,
 And the grass will grow when I am
 gone,
 And the wet west wind and the world
 will go on.
 Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
 No is trouble and cloud and storm,
 Ay is life for a hundred years,
 No will push me down to the worm,
 And when I am there and dead and
 gone,
 The wet west wind and the world will
 go on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and
 the wet!
 Wet west wind how you blow, you
 blow!
 And never a line from my lady yet!
 Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?

Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
 The wet west wind and the world may
 go on.

NO ANSWER.

Winds are loud and you are dumb,
 Take my love, for love will come,
 Love will come but once a life.
 Winds are loud and winds will pass!
 Spring is here with leaf and grass:
 Take my love and be my wife.
 After-loves of maids and men
 Are but dainties drest again:
 Love me now, you'll love me then:
 Love can love but once a life.

THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,
 Claspt on her seal, my sweet!
 Must I take you and break you,
 Two little hands that meet?
 I must take you, and break you,
 And loving hands must part —
 Take, take — break, break —
 Break — you may break my heart.
 Faint heart never won —
 Break, break, and all's done.

AY.

Be merry, all birds, to-day,
 Be merry on earth as you never
 were merry before,
 Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far
 away,
 And merry for ever and ever, and
 one day more.

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.
 Look, look, how he flits,
 The fire-crown'd king of the wrens,
 from out of the pine!
 Look how they tumble the blossom,
 the mad little tits!
 "Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!" was ever a
 May so fine?

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.
 O merry the linnet and dove,
 And swallow and sparrow and
 thristle, and have your desire!
 O merry my heart, you have gotten
 the wings of love,
 And flit like the king of the wrens
 with a crown of fire.

Why?

For its ay ay, ay ay.

WHEN.

Sun comes, moon comes,
 Time slips away.
 Sun sets, moon sets,
 Love, fix a day.

"A year hence, a year hence."
 "We shall both be gray."
 "A month hence, a month hence."
 "Far, far away."

"A week hence, a week hence."
 "Ah, the long delay."
 "Wait a little, wait a little,
 You shall fix a day."

"To-morrow, love, to-morrow
 And that's an age away."
 Blaze upon her window, sun,
 And honor all the day.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

Light, so low upon earth,
 You send a flash to the sun.
 Here is the golden close of love,
 All my wooing is done.

Oh, the woods and the meadows,
 Woods where we hid from the wet,
 Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
 Meadows in which we met!

Light, so low in the vale
 You flash and lighten afar,
 For this is the golden morning of love,
 And you are his morning star.
 Flash, I am coming, I come,
 By meadow and stile and wood,
 Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,
 Into my heart and my blood!

Heart, are you great enough
 For a love that never tires?
 O heart, are you great enough for love?
 I have heard of thorns and briers.
 Over the thorns and briers,
 Over the meadows and stiles,
 Over the world to the end of it
 Flash for a million miles.



IDYLS OF THE KING.



DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory — since he held
 them dear,
 Perchance as finding there uncon-
 sciously
 Some image of himself — I dedicate,
 I dedicate, I consecrate with tears —
 These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
 Scarce other than my king's ideal
 knight,
 "Who revered his conscience as
 his king;
 Whose glory was, redressing human
 wrong;
 Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd
 to it;
 Who loved one only and who clave to
 her —"
 Her — over all whose realms to their
 last isle,
 Commingled with the gloom of im-
 minent war,
 The shadow of His loss drew like
 eclipse,
 Darkening the world. We have lost
 him: he is gone:
 We know him now: all narrow jeal-
 ousies
 Are silent; and we see him as he
 moved,
 How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,
 wise,
 With what sublime repression of him-
 self,
 And in what limits, and how tenderly;
 Not swaying to this faction or to that;
 Not making his high place the lawless
 perch
 Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-
 ground
 For pleasure; but thro' all this tract
 of years
 Wearing the white flower of a blame-
 less life,
 Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
 In that fierce light which beats upon
 a throne,
 And blackens every blot: for where
 is he,

Who dares foreshadow for an only
 son
 A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than
 his?
 Or how should England dreaming of
 his sons
 Hope more for these than some in-
 heritance
 Of such a life, a heart, a mind as
 thine,
 Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
 Laborious for her people and her
 poor —
 Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler
 day —
 Far-sighted summoner of War and
 Waste
 To fruitful strifes and rivalries of
 peace —
 Sweet nature gilded by the gracious
 gleam
 Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
 Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince
 indeed,
 Beyond all titles, and a household
 name,
 Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the
 Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but
 still endure;
 Break not, for thou art Royal, but
 endure,
 Remembering all the beauty of that
 star
 Which shone so close beside Thee that
 ye made
 One light together, but has past and
 leaves
 The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,
 His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow
 Thee,
 The love of all Thy sons encompass
 Thee,
 The love of all Thy daughters cherish
 Thee,
 The love of all Thy people comfort
 Thee,
 Till God's love set Thee at his side
 again!

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
 Had one fair daughter, and none other
 child;
 And she was fairest of all flesh on
 earth,
 Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur
 came
 Ruled in this isle, and ever waging
 war
 Each upon other, wasted all the land;
 And still from time to time the
 heathen host
 Swarm'd overseas, and harried what
 was left.
 And so there grew great tracts of wil-
 derness,
 Wherein the beast was ever more and
 more,
 But man was less and less, till Arthur
 came.
 For first Aurelius lived and fought
 and died,
 And after him King Uther fought and
 died,
 But either fail'd to make the kingdom
 one.
 And after these King Arthur for a
 space,
 And thro' the puissance of his Table
 Round,
 Drew all their petty principedoms under
 him,
 Their king and head, and made a realm,
 and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard
 was waste,
 Thick with wet woods, and many a
 beast therein,
 And none or few to scare or chase the
 beast;
 So that wild dog, and wolf and boar
 and bear
 Came night and day, and rooted in
 the fields,
 And wallow'd in the gardens of the
 King.
 And ever and anon the wolf would
 steal
 The children and devour, but now and
 then,
 Her own brood lost or dead, lent her
 fierce teat
 To human sucklings; and the children,
 housed
 In her foul den, there at their meat
 would growl,
 And mock their foster-mother on four
 feet,
 Till, straighten'd, they grew up to
 wolf-like men,

Worse than the wolves. And King
 Leodogran
 Groan'd for the Roman legions here
 again,
 And Cæsar's eagle: then his brother
 king,
 Urien, assail'd him: last a heathen
 horde,
 Reddening the sun with smoke and
 earth with blood,
 And on the spike that split the
 mother's heart
 Spitting the child, brake on him, till,
 amazed,
 He knew not whither he should turn
 for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly
 crown'd,
 Tho' not without an uproar made by
 those
 Who cried, "He is not Uther's son"
 — the King
 Sent to him, saying, "Arise, and help
 us thou!
 For here between the man and beast
 we die."

And Arthur yet had done no deed
 of arms,
 But heard the call, and came: and
 Guinevere
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him
 pass;
 But since he neither wore on helm or
 shield
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
 But rode a simple knight among his
 knights,
 And many of these in richer arms
 than he,
 She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she
 saw,
 One among many, tho' his face was
 bare.
 But Arthur, looking downward as he
 past,
 Felt the light of her eyes into his life.
 Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and
 pitch'd
 His tents beside the forest. Then he
 drave
 The heathen; after, slew the beast,
 and fell'd
 The forest, letting in the sun, and
 made
 Broad pathways for the hunter and
 the knight
 And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
 A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the
 hearts
 Of those great Lords and Barons of
 his realm

Flash'd forth and into war: for most
 of these,
 Colleaguings with a score of petty
 kings,
 Made head against him, crying, "Who
 is he
 That he should rule us? who hath
 proven him
 King Uther's son? for lo! we look at
 him,
 And find nor face nor bearing, limbs
 nor voice,
 Are like to those of Uther whom we
 knew.
 This is the son of Gorlois, not the
 King;
 This is the son of Anton, not the
 King."

And Arthur, passing thence to
 battle, felt
 Travail, and throes and agonies of the
 life,
 Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere;
 And thinking as he rode, "Her father
 said
 That there between the man and beast
 they die.
 Shall I not lift her from this land of
 beasts
 Up to my throne, and side by side
 with me?
 What happiness to reign a lonely
 king,
 Vext — O ye stars that shudder over
 me,
 O earth that soundest hollow under
 me,
 Vext with waste dreams? for saving
 I be join'd
 To her that is the fairest under heaven,
 I seem as nothing in the mighty
 world,
 And cannot will my will, nor work my
 work
 Wholly, nor make myself in mine own
 realm
 Victor and lord. But were I join'd
 with her,
 Then might we live together as one
 life,
 And reigning with one will in every-
 thing
 Have power in this dark land to
 lighten it,
 And power on this dead world to
 make it live."

Thereafter — as he speaks who tells
 the tale —
 When Arthur reach'd a field-of-battle
 bright
 With pitch'd pavilions of his foe, the
 world
 Was all so clear about him, that he
 saw

The smallest rock far on the faintest
 hill,
 And even in high day the morning
 star.
 So when the King had set his banner
 broad,
 At once from either side, with trumpet-
 blast,
 And shouts, and clarions shrilling unto
 blood,
 The long-lanced battle let their horses
 run.
 And now the Barons and the kings
 prevail'd,
 And now the King, as here and there
 that war
 Went swaying; but the Powers who
 walk the world
 Made lightnings and great thunders
 over him,
 And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by
 main might,
 And mightier of his hands with every
 blow,
 And leading all his knighthood threw
 the kings
 Carádos, Urien, Cradlemon of Wales,
 Claudias, and Clariance of Northum-
 berland,
 The King Brandagoras of Latangor,
 With Anguisant of Erin, Morganore,
 And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a
 voice
 As dreadful as the shout of one who
 sees
 To one who sins, and deems himself
 alone
 And all the world asleep, they swerved
 and brake
 Flying, and Arthur call'd to stay the
 brands
 That hack'd among the flyers, "Ho!
 they yield!"
 So like a painted battle the war stood
 Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,
 And in the heart of Arthur joy was
 lord.
 He laugh'd upon his warrior whom
 he loved
 And honor'd most. "Thou dost not
 doubt me King,
 So well thine arm hath wrought for
 me to-day."
 "Sir and my liege," he cried, "the
 fire of God
 Descends upon thee in the battle-field:
 I know thee for my King!" Whereat
 the two,
 For each had ward'd either in the
 fight,
 Swore on the field of death a deathless
 love.
 And Arthur said, "Man's word is God
 in man:
 Let chance what will, I trust thee to
 the death."

Then quickly from the foughten
field he sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
His new-made knights, to King Leodogran,
Saying, "If I in aught have served
thee well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to
wife."

Whom when he heard, Leodogran
in heart
Debating—"How should I that am a
king,
However much he help me at my
need,
Give my one daughter saving to a
king,
And a king's son?"—lifted his voice,
and call'd
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to
whom
He trusted all things, and of him
required
His counsel: "Knowest thou aught of
Arthur's birth?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain
and said,
"Sir King, there be but two old men
that know:
And each is twice as old as I; and one
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever
served
King Uther thro' his magic art; and
one
Is Merlin's master (so they call him)
Bleys,
Who taught him magic; but the
scholar ran
Before the master, and so far, that
Bleys
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and
wrote
All things and whatsoever Merlin did
In one great annal-book, where after
years
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's
birth."

To whom the King Leodogran
replied,
"O friend, had I been holpen half as
well
By this King Arthur as by thee to-
day,
Then beast and man had had their
share of me:
But summon here before us yet once
more
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him,
the King said,
"I have seen the cuckoo chased by
lesser fowl,

And reason in the chase: but where-
fore now
Do these your lords stir up the heat
of war,
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-
selves,
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's
son?"

And Ulfius and Brastius answer'd,
"Ay."
Then Bedivere, the first of all his
knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,
spake—
For bold in heart and act and word
was he,
Whenever slander breathed against
the King—

"Sir, there be many rumors on this
head:
For there be those who hate him in
their hearts,
Call him baseborn, and since his ways
are sweet,
And theirs are bestial, hold him less
than man:
And there be those who deem him
more than man,
And dream he dropt from heaven: but
my belief
In all this matter—so ye care to
learn—
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's
time
The prince and warrior Gorlois, he
that held
Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
Was wedded with a winsome wife,
Ygerne:
And daughters had she borne him,—
one whereof,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney,
Bellicent,
Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved
To Arthur,—but a son she had not
borne.
And Uther cast upon her eyes of love:
But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,
So loathed the bright dishonor of his
love,
That Gorlois and King Uther went to
war:
And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.
Then Uther in his wrath and heat
besieged
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her
men,
Seeing the mighty swarm about their
walls,
Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd
in,
And there was none to call to but him-
self.

So, compass'd by the power of the
 King,
 Enforced she was to wed him in her
 tears,
 And with a shameful swiftness: after-
 ward,
 Not many moons, King Uther died
 himself,
 Moaning and wailing for an heir to
 rule
 After him, lest the realm should go to
 wrack.
 And that same night, the night of the
 new year,
 By reason of the bitterness and grief
 That vext his mother, all before his
 time
 Was Arthur born, and all as soon as
 born
 Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate
 To Merlin, to be holden far apart
 Until his hour should come; because
 the lords
 Of that fierce day were as the lords of
 this,
 Wild beasts, and surely would have
 torn the child
 Piecemeal among them, had they
 known; for each
 But sought to rule for his own self
 and hand,
 And many hated Uther for the sake
 Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took
 the child,
 And gave him to Sir Anton, an old
 knight
 And ancient friend of Uther; and his
 wife
 Nursed the young prince, and rear'd
 him with her own;
 And no man knew. And ever since
 the lords
 Have foughten like wild beasts among
 themselves,
 So that the realm has gone to wrack:
 but now,
 This year, when Merlin (for his hour
 had come)
 Brought Arthur forth, and set him in
 the hall,
 Proclaiming, 'Here is Uther's heir,
 your king,'
 A hundred voices cried, 'Away with
 him!
 No king of ours! a son of Gorlois
 he,
 Or else the child of Anton, and no
 king,
 Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro'
 his craft,
 And while the people clamor'd for a
 king,
 Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the
 great lords
 Banded, and so brake out in open
 war."

Then while the King debated with
 himself
 If Arthur were the child of shameful-
 ness,
 Or born the son of Gorlois, after
 death,
 Or Uther's son, and born before his
 time,
 Or whether there were truth in any-
 thing
 Said by these three, there came to
 Cameliard,
 With Gawain and young Modred, her
 two sons,
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney,
 Bellicent;
 Whom as he could, not as he would,
 the King
 Made feast for, saying, as they sat at
 meat,

"A doubtful throne is ice on sum-
 mer seas
 Ye come from Arthur's court. Victor
 his men
 Report him! Yea, but ye — think ye
 this king —
 So many those that hate him, and so
 strong,
 So few his knights, however brave
 they be —
 Hath body enow to hold his foemen
 down?"

"O King," she cried, "and I will
 tell thee: few,
 Few, but all brave, all of one mind
 with him;
 For I was near him when the savage
 yells
 Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur
 sat
 Crown'd on the daïs, and his warriors
 cried,
 'Be thou the king, and we will work
 thy will
 Who love thee.' Then the King in
 low deep tones,
 And simple words of great authority,
 Bound them by so strait vows to his
 own self,
 That when they rose, knighted from
 kneeling, some
 Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
 Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one
 who wakes
 Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheer'd
 his Table Round
 With large divine and comfortable
 words
 Beyond my tongue to tell thee — I
 beheld
 From eye to eye thro' all their Order
 flash

A momentary likeness of the King:
 And ere it left their faces, thro' the
 cross
 And those around it and the Crucified,
 Down from the casement over Arthur,
 smote
 Flame-color, vert and azure, in three
 rays,
 One falling upon each of three fair
 queens,
 Who stood in silence near his throne,
 the friends
 Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with
 bright
 Sweet faces, who will help him at his
 need.

"And there I saw mage Merlin,
 whose vast wit
 And hundred winters are but as the
 hands
 Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

"And near him stood the Lady of
 the Lake,
 Who knows a subtler magic than his
 own—
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
 derful.
 She gave the King his huge cross-
 hilted sword,
 Whereby to drive the heathen out: a
 mist
 Of incense curl'd about her, and her
 face
 Wellnigh was hidden in the minster
 gloom;
 But there was heard among the holy
 hymns
 A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
 Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever
 storms
 May shake the world, and when the
 surface rolls,
 Hath power to walk the waters like
 our Lord.

"There likewise I beheld Excalibur
 Before him at his crowning borne, the
 sword
 That rose from out the bosom of the
 lake,
 And Arthur row'd across and took it
 — rich
 With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
 Bewildering heart and eye—the blade
 so bright
 That men are blinded by it—on one
 side,
 Graven in the oldest tongue of all this
 world,
 'Take me,' but turn the blade and ye
 shall see,
 And written in the speech ye speak
 yourself,

'Cast me away!' And sad was
 Arthur's face
 Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd
 him,
 'Take thou and strike! the time to
 cast away
 Is yet far-off.' So this great brand
 the king
 Took, and by this will beat his foemen
 down."

Thereat Leodogram rejoiced, but
 thought
 To sift his doubtings to the last, and
 ask'd,
 Fixing full eyes of question on her
 face,
 "The swallow and the swift are near
 akin,
 But thou art closer to this noble prince,
 Being his own dear sister;" and she
 said,
 "Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am
 I;"
 "And therefore Arthur's sister?"
 ask'd the King.
 She answer'd, "These be secret things,"
 and sign'd
 To those two sons to pass and let
 them be.
 And Gawain went, and breaking into
 song
 Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying
 hair
 Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he
 saw:
 But Modred laid his ear beside the
 doors,
 And there half-heard; the same that
 afterward
 Struck for the throne, and striking
 found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,
 "What know I?
 For dark my mother was in eyes and
 hair,
 And dark in hair and eyes am I; and
 dark
 Was Gorlois, yea and dark was Uther
 too,
 Wellnigh to blackness; but this King
 is fair
 Beyond the race of Britons and of men.
 Moreover, always in my mind I hear
 A cry from out the dawning of my life,
 A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
 'O that ye had some brother, pretty
 one,
 To guard thee on the rough ways of
 the world.'"

"Ay," said the King, "and hear ye
 such a cry?
 But when did Arthur chance upon
 thee first?"

"O King!" she cried, "and I will
 tell thee true:
 He found me first when yet a little
 maid:
 Beaten I had been for a little fault
 Whereof I was not guilty; and out I
 ran
 And flung myself down on a bank of
 heath,
 And hated this fair world and all
 therein,
 And wept, and wish'd that I were
 dead; and he—
 I know not whether of himself he
 came,
 Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,
 can walk
 Unseen at pleasure—he was at my
 side
 And spake sweet words, and comforted
 my heart,
 And dried my tears, being a child with
 me.
 And many a time he came, and ever-
 more
 As I grew greater grew with me; and
 sad
 At times he seem'd, and sad with him
 was I,
 Stern too at times, and then I loved
 him not,
 But sweet again, and then I loved him
 well.
 And now of late I see him less and
 less,
 But those first days had golden hours
 for me,
 For then I surely thought he would
 be king.

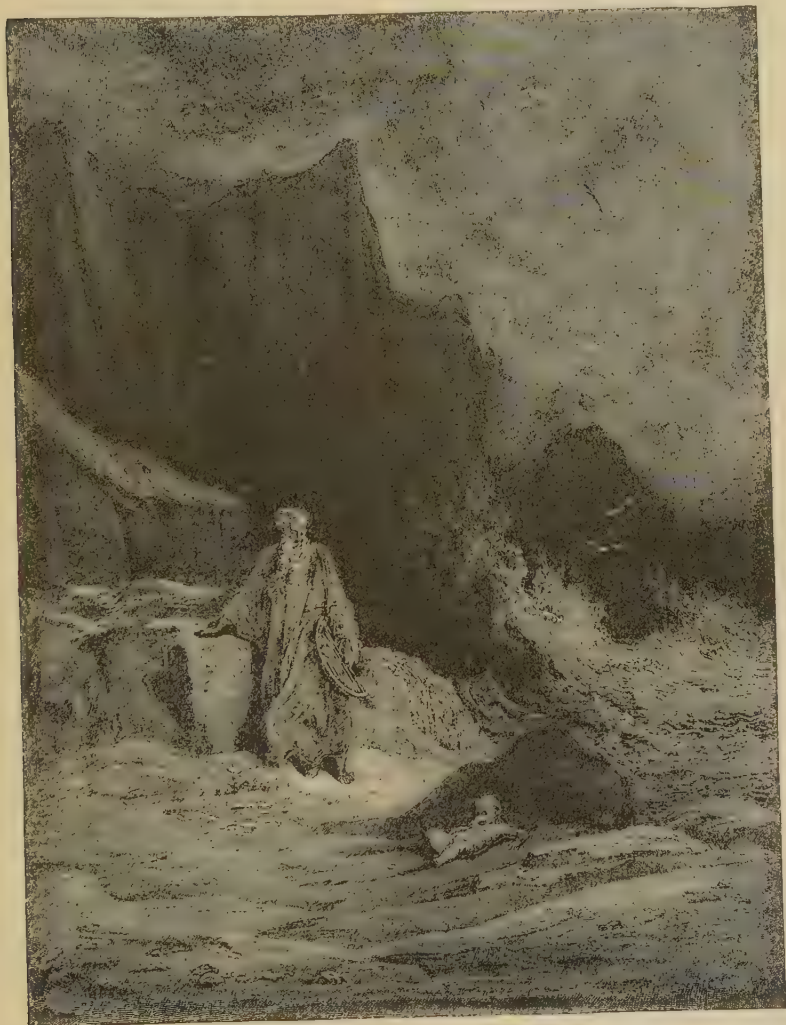
"But let me tell thee now another
 tale:
 For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as
 they say,
 Died but of late, and sent his cry to
 me,
 To hear him speak before he left his
 life.
 Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay
 the mage;
 And when I enter'd told me that him-
 self
 And Merlin ever served about the
 King,
 Uther, before he died; and on the
 night
 When Uther in Tintagil past away
 Moaning and wailing for an heir, the
 two
 Left the still King, and passing forth
 to breathe,
 Then from the castle gateway by the
 chasm
 Descending thro' the dismal night—
 a night

In which the bounds of heaven and
 earth were lost—
 Beheld, so high upon the dreary
 deeps
 It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape
 thereof
 A dragon wing'd, and all from stem
 to stern
 Bright with a shining people on the
 decks,
 And gone as soon as seen. And then
 the two
 Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the
 great sea fall,
 Wave after wave, each mightier than
 the last,
 Till last, a ninth one, gathering half
 the deep
 And full of voices, slowly rose and
 plunged
 Roaring, and all the wave was in a
 flame:
 And down the wave and in the flame
 was borne
 A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's
 feet,
 Who stooped and caught the babe, and
 cried 'The King!
 Here is an heir for Uther!' And the
 fringe
 Of that great breaker, sweeping up
 the strand,
 Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the
 word,
 And all at once all round him rose in
 fire,
 So that the child and he were clothed
 in fire.
 And presently thereafter follow'd
 calm,
 Free sky and stars: 'And this same
 child,' he said,
 'Is he who reigns; nor could I part
 in peace
 Till this were told.' And saying this
 the seer
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful
 pass of death,
 Not ever to be question'd any more
 Save on the further side; but when I
 met
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things
 were truth—
 The shining dragon and the naked
 child
 Descending in the glory of the seas—
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and an-
 swer'd me
 In riddling triplets of old time, and
 said:

" 'Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow
 in the sky!
 A young man will be wiser by and by;
 An old man's wit may wander ere he
 die.

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on
the lea!
And truth is this to me, and that to
thee;
And truth or clothed or naked let it
be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free
blossom blows:
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he
who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep
he goes.



*"And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet."*

"So Merlin riddling anger'd me;
but thou
Fear not to give this King thine only
child,
Guinevere: so great bards of him will
sing

Hereafter; and dark sayings from of
old
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds
of men,
And echo'd by old folk beside their
fires

For comfort after their wage-work is
done,
Speak of the King; and Merlin in our
time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and
sworn
Tho' men may wound him that he will
not die,
But pass, again to come; and then or
now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hail him for
their king."

She spake and King Leodogran
rejoiced,
But musing "Shall I answer yea or
nay?"
Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and
slept, and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever
grew,
Field after field, up to a height, the
peak
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom
king,
Now looming, and now lost; and on
the slope
The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd
was driven,
Fire glimpsed; and all the land from
roof and rick,
In drifts of smoke before a rolling
wind,
Stream'd to the peak, and mingled
with the haze
And made it thicker; while the phan-
tom king
Sent out at times a voice; and here
or there
Stood one who pointed toward the
voice, the rest
Slew on and burnt, crying, "No king
of ours,
No son of Uther, and no king of
ours;"
Till with a wink his dream was
changed, the haze
Descended, and the solid earth be-
came
As nothing, but the King stood out
in heaven,
Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and
sent
Ulfius, and Brastias and Bedivere,
Back to the court of Arthur answer-
ing yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior
whom he loved
And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to
ride forth
And bring the Queen;—and watch'd
him from the gates:
And Lancelot past away among the
flowers,

(For then was latter April) and
return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with
Guinevere.
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high
saint,
Chief of the church in Britain, and
before
The statelyest of her altar-shrines, the
King
That morn was married, while in stain-
less white,
The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him,
his knights
Stood round him, and rejoicing in his
joy.
Far shone the fields of May thro'
open door,
The sacred altar blossom'd white with
May,
The Sun of May descended on their
King,
They gazed on all earth's beauty in
their Queen,
Roll'd incense, and there past along
the hymns
A voice as of the waters, while the two
Sware at the shrine of Christ a death-
less love:
And Arthur said, "Behold, thy doom
is mine.
Let chance what will, I love thee to
the death!"
To whom the Queen replied with
drooping eyes,
"King and my lord, I love thee to the
death!"
And holy Dubric spread his hands
and spake,
"Reign ye, and live and love, and
make the world
Other, and may thy Queen be one
with thee,
And all this Order of thy Table
Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their
King!"

So Dubric said; but when they left
the shrine
Great Lords from Rome before the
portal stood,
In scornful stillness gazing as they
past;
Then while they paced a city all on
fire
With sun and cloth of gold, the trum-
pets blew,
And Arthur's knighthood sang before
the King:—

"Blow trumpet, for the world is
white with May;
Blow trumpet, the long night hath
roll'd away!

Blow thro' the living world — 'Let
the King reign.'

"Shall Rome or Heathen rule in
Arthur's realm?
Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe
upon helm,
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let
the King reign.

"Strike for the King and live! his
knights have heard
That God hath told the King a secret
word.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let
the King reign.

"Blow trumpet! he will lift us
from the dust.
Blow trumpet! live the strength and
die the lust!
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let
the King reign.

"Strike for the King and die! and
if thou diest,
The King is King, and ever wills the
highest.
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand!
Let the King reign.

"Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his
May!
Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by
day!
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand!
Let the King reign.

"The King will follow Christ, and
we the King

In whom high God hath breathed a
secret thing.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let
the King reign."

So sang the knighthood, moving to
their hall.
There at the banquet those great
Lords from Rome,
The slowly-fading mistress of the
world,
Strode in, and claim'd their tribute as
of yore.
But Arthur spake, "Behold, for these
have sworn
To wage my wars, and worship me
their King;
The old order changeth, yielding place
to new;
And we that fight for our fair father
Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and
old
To drive the heathen from your
Roman wall,
No tribute will we pay": so those
great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur
strove with Rome.
And Arthur and his knighthood for
a space
Were all one will, and thro' that
strength the King
Drew in the petty principedoms under
him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles
overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm
and reign'd.

THE ROUND TABLE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.
GERAINT AND ENID.
MERLIN AND VIVIEN.
LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

THE HOLY GRAIL.
PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.
THE LAST TOURNAMENT.
GUINEVERE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.

The last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful
spring
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted
Pine
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd
away.
"How he went down," said Gareth, "as
"as a false knight
Or evil king before my lance if lance
Were mine to use — O senseless cata-
ract,
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy —
And yet thou art but swollen with
cold snows

And mine is living blood: thou dost / O
His will,
The Maker's, and not knowest, and I
that know,
Have strength and wit, in my good
mother's hall
Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and
whistled to —
Since the good mother holds me still / O
a child!
Good mother is bad mother unto
me!
A worse were better; yet no worse
would I.
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put
force

To weary her ears with one continuous
 prayer,
 Until she let me fly discased to *30*
 sweep
 In ever-highering eagle-circles up
 To the great Sun of Glory, and thence
 swoop
 Down upon all things base, and dash
 them dead,
 A knight of Arthur, working out his
 will,
 To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain, *30*
 when he came
 With Modred hither in the summer-
 time,
 Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven
 knight.
 Modred for want of worthier was the
 judge.
 Then I so shook him in the saddle, he
 said,
 'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,' *30*
 said so — he —
 Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was
 mute,
 For he is alway sullen: what care I?"

And Gareth went, and hovering
 round her chair
 Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still
 the child,
 Sweet mother, do ye love the child?" *30*
 She laugh'd,
 "Thou art but a wild-goose to ques-
 tion it."
 "Then, mother, an ye love the child,"
 he said,
 "Being a goose and rather tame than
 wild,
 Hear the child's story." "Yea, my
 well-beloved,
 An 'twere but of goose and golden *40*
 eggs."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-
 ling eyes,
 "Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg
 of mine
 Was finer gold than any goose can
 lay;
 For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
 Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a *40*
 palm
 As glitters gilded in thy Book of
 Hours.
 And there was ever haunting round
 the palm
 A lusty youth, but poor, who often
 saw
 The splendor sparkling from aloft,
 and thought
 'An I could climb and lay my hand *50*
 upon it,
 Then were I wealthier than a leash of
 kings,'

But ever when he reach'd a hand to
 climb,
 One, that had loved him from his
 childhood, caught
 And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou
 break thy neck,
 I charge thee by my love,' and so the *50*
 boy,
 Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor
 brake his neck,
 But brake his very heart in pining
 for it,
 And past away."

To whom the mother said,
 "True love, sweet son, had risk'd him-
 self and climb'd,
 And handed down the golden treasure *60*
 to him."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-
 ling eyes,
 "Gold? said I gold? — ay then, why
 he, or she,
 Or whoso'er it was, or half the world
 Had ventured — had the thing I spake
 of been
 Mere gold — but this was all of that *60*
 true steel,
 Whereof they forged the brand Ex-
 calibur,
 And lightnings play'd about it in the
 storm,
 And all the little fowl were flurried
 at it,
 And there were cries and clashings in
 the nest,
 That sent him from his senses: let me *70*
 go."

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself
 and said,
 "Hast thou no pity upon my loneli-
 ness?
 Lo, where thy father Lot beside the
 hearth
 Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd
 out!
 For ever since when traitor to the *75*
 King
 He fought against him in the Barons'
 war,
 And Arthur gave him back his terri-
 tory,
 His age hath slowly droopt, and now
 lies there
 A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburia-
 ble,
 No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor *80*
 speaks, nor knows.
 And both thy brethren are in Arthur's
 hall,
 Albeit neither loved with that full
 love
 I feel for thee, nor worthy such a
 love:

Stay therefore thou ; red berries charm
 the bird,
 And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, ⁷⁵
 the wars,
 Who never knewest finger-ache, nor
 pang
 Of wrench'd or broken limb — an often
 chance
 In those brain-stunning shocks, and
 tourney-falls,
 Frights to my heart ; but stay : follow
 the deer
 By these tall firs and our fast-falling ⁸⁰
 burns ;
 So make thy manhood mightier day
 by day ;
 Sweet is the chase : and I will seek
 thee out
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to
 grace
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my
 prone year,
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness ⁸⁵
 I know not thee, myself, nor any-
 thing.
 Stay, my best son ! ye are yet more
 boy than man."

Then Gareth, "An ye hold me yet
 for child,
 Hear yet once more the story of the
 child.
 For, mother, there was once a King, ¹⁰⁰
 like ours.
 The prince his heir, when tall and
 marriageable,
 Ask'd for a bride ; and thereupon the
 King
 Set two before him. One was fair,
 strong, arm'd —
 But to be won by force — and many
 men
 Desired her ; one, good lack, no man ¹⁰⁵
 desired.
 And these were the conditions of the
 King :
 That save he won the first by force,
 he needs
 Must wed that other, whom no man
 desired,
 A red-faced bride who knew herself
 so vile,
 That evermore she long'd to hide her- ¹¹⁰
 self,
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to
 eye —
 Yea — some she cleaved to, but they
 died of her.
 And one — they call'd her Fame ; and
 one, — O Mother,
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you
 — Shame !
 Man am I grown, a man's work must ¹¹⁵
 I do.
 Follow the deer ? follow the Christ,
 the King,

Live pure, speak true, right wrong,
 follow the King —
 Else, wherefore born ?"

To whom the mother said,
 "Sweet son, for there be many who ¹²⁰
 deem him not,
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven
 King —
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him
 King,
 When I was frequent with him in my
 youth,
 And heard him Kingly speak, and
 doubted him
 No more than he, himself ; but felt ¹²⁵
 him mine,
 Of closest kin to me : yet — wilt thou
 leave
 Thine careful bidding here, and risk
 'thine all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven
 King ?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round
 his birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet ¹³⁰
 son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly, "Not
 an hour,
 So that ye yield me — I will walk thro'
 fire,
 Mother, to gain it — your full leave to
 go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of
 ruin'd Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm, ¹³⁵
 and crush'd
 The Idolaters, and made the people
 free ?
 Who should be King save him who
 makes us free ?"

So when the Queen, who long had
 sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which
 he grew,
 Found her son's will unwaveringly ¹⁴⁰
 one,
 She answer'd craftily, "Will ye walk
 thro' fire ?
 Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed
 the smoke.
 Ay, go then, an ye must : only one
 proof,
 Before thou ask the King to make thee
 knight,
 Of thine obedience and thy love to ¹⁴⁵
 me,
 Thy mother, — I demand."

And Gareth cried,
 "A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
 Nay — quick ! the proof to prove me
 to the quick !"

But slowly spake the mother look- 150
 ing at him,
 "Prince, thou shalt go disguised to
 Arthur's hall,
 And hire thyself to serve for meats
 and drinks
 Among the scullions and the kitchen-
 knaves,
 And those that hand the dish across
 the bar.
 Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any- 155
 one.
 And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth
 and a day."

For so the Queen believed that when
 her son
 Beheld his only way to glory lead.
 Low down thro' villain kitchen-vas-
 salage,
 Her own true Gareth was too princely- 160
 proud
 To pass thereby; so should he rest
 with her,
 Closed in her castle from the sound of
 arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then
 replied,
 "The thrall in person may be free in
 soul,
 And I shall see the jousts. Thy son 165
 am I,
 And since thou art my mother, must
 obey.
 I therefore yield me freely to thy will;
 For hence will I, disguised, and hire
 myself
 To serve with scullions and with
 kitchen-knaves;
 Nor tell my name to any — no, not the 170
 King."

Gareth awhile linger'd. The
 mother's eye
 Full of the wistful fear that he would
 go,
 And turning toward him wheresoe'er
 he turn'd,
 Perplex'd his outward purpose, till an
 hour,
 When waken'd by the wind which with 175
 full voice
 Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on
 to dawn,
 He rose, and out of slumber calling
 two
 That still had tended on him from his
 birth,
 Before the wakeful mother heard him,
 went.

The three were clad like tillers of 180
 the soil.
 Southward they set their faces. The
 birds made

Melody on branch, and melody in mid
 air.
 The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd
 into green,
 And the live green had kindled into
 flowers,
 For it was past the time of Easterday. 185

So, when their feet were planted on
 the plain
 That broaden'd toward the base of
 Camelot,
 Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
 Rolling her smoke about the Royal
 mount,
 That rose between the forest and the 190
 field.
 At times the summit of the high city
 flash'd;
 At times the spires and turrets half-
 way down
 Prick'd thro' the mist; at times the
 great gate shone
 Only, that open'd on the field below:
 Anon, the whole fair city had disap- 195
 pear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth
 were amazed,
 One crying, "Let us go no further,
 lord.
 Here is a city of Enchanters, built
 By fairy kings." The second echo'd
 him,
 "Lord, we have heard from our wise 200
 man at home
 To Northward, that this King is not
 the King,
 But only changeling out of Fairy-
 land,
 Who drave the heathen hence by
 sorcery
 And Merlin's glamour." Then the first
 again,
 "Lord, there is no such city anywhere, 205
 But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them
 With laughter, swearing he had
 glamour enow
 In his own blood, his principedom, youth
 and hopes,
 To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian- 210
 sea;
 So push'd them all unwilling toward
 the gate.
 And there was no gate like it under
 heaven.
 For barefoot on the keystone, which
 was lined
 And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
 The Lady of the Lake stood: all her 215
 dress
 Wept from her sides as water flowing
 away;

But like the cross her great and goodly
arms
Stretch'd under all the cornice and
upheld:
And drops of water fell from either
hand;
And down from one a sword was hung, 20
from one
A censer, either worn with wind and
storm;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred
fish;
And in the space to left of her, and
right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices
done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if 25
Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that
men
Were giddy gazing there; and over
all
High on the top were those three
Queens, the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at
his need.

Then those with Gareth for so long, 30
a space
Stared at the figures, that at last it
seem'd
The dragon-boughts and elvish em-
blemings
Began to move, seethe, twine and
curl: they call'd
To Gareth, "Lord, the gateway is
alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his 35
eyes
So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd
to move.
Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
Back from the gate started the three,
to whom
From out thereunder came an ancient
man,
Long-bearded, saying, "Who be ye, 40
my sons?"

Then Gareth, "We be tillers of the
soil,
Who leaving share in furrow come to
see
The glories of our King: but these,
my men,
(Your city moved so weirdly in the
mist)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or 45
come
From Fairyland; and whether this
be built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and
Queens;
Or whether there be any city at all;
Or all a vision: and this music now

Hath scared them both, but tell thou 50
these the truth."

Then that old Seer made answer
playing on him
And saying, "Son, I have seen the
good ship sail
Keel upward and mast downward in
the heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air:
And here is truth; but an it please 55
thee not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told
it me.
For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city,
son;
They came from out a sacred mountain-
cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp 60
in hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And as thou sayest it is enchanted,
son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems
Saving the King; tho' some there be
that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real: 65
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so
thou pass
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou
become
A thrall to his enchantments, for the
King
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a
shame
A man should not be bound by, yet 70
the which
No man can keep; but, so thou dread
to swear,
Pass not beneath this gateway, but
abide
Without, among the cattle of the
field.
For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city 75
is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.

Gareth spake
Anger'd, "Old Master, reverence thine
own beard
That looks as white as utter truth, 80
and seems
Wellnigh as long as thou art statured
tall!
Why mockest thou the stranger that
hath been
To thee fair-spoken?"

But the Seer replied,
"Know ye not then the Riddling of 85
the Bards?
'Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion'?"

I mock thee not but as thou mockest
me,
And all that see thee, for thou art not
who
Thou seemest, but I know thee who 290
thou art.
And now thou goest up to mock the
King,
Who cannot brook the shadow of any
lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending
here
Turn'd to the right, and past along
the plain;
Whom Gareth looking after said, "My 291
men,
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
Here on the threshold of our enter-
prise.
Let love be blamed for it, nor she, nor
I:
Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer 300
He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd
with his twain
Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and the
work
Of ancient kings who did their days in
stone;
Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at 305
Arthur's court,
Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and
everywhere
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-
ing peak
And pinnacle, and had made it spire
to heaven.
And ever and anon a knight would pass
Outward, or inward to the hall: his 310
arms
Clash'd; and the sound was good to
Gareth's ear.
And out of bower and casement shyly
glanced
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars
of love;
And all about a healthful people stept
As in the presence of a gracious king. 315

Then into hall Gareth ascending
heard
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and be-
held
Far over heads in that long-vaulted
hall
The splendor of the presence of the
King
Throned, and delivering doom — and 320
look'd no more —
But felt his young heart hammering
in his ears,
And thought, "For this half-shadow
of a lie

The truthful King will doom me when
I speak."

Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find 325
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights, that ranged
about the throne,
Clear honor shining like the dewy star
Of dawn, and faith in their great King,
with pure
Affection, and the light of victory, 330
And glory gain'd, and evermore to
gain.

Then came a widow crying to the
King,
"A boon, Sir King! Thy father,
Uther, reft
From my dead lord a field with vio-
lence:
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold, 335
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our
eyes,
We yielded not; and then he reft us
of it
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor
field."

Said Arthur, "Whether would ye?
gold or field?"
To whom the woman weeping, "Nay, 340
my lord,
The field was pleasant in my hus-
band's eye."

And Arthur, "Have thy pleasant
field again,
And thrice the gold for Uther's use
thereof,
According to the years. No boon is
here,
But justice, so thy say be proven 345
true.
Accursed, who from the wrongs his
father did
Would shape himself a right!"

And while she past,
Came yet another widow crying to
him,
"A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy, 350
King, am I.
With thine own hand thou slewest my
dear lord,
A knight of Uther in the Barons' war,
When Lot and many another rose and
fought
Against thee, saying thou wert basely
born.
I held with these, and loathe to ask 355
thee aught.
Yet lo! my husband's brother had my
son
Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved
him dead;
And standeth seized of that inheritance

Which thou that slewest the sire hast
left the son.
So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for 365
hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle
for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for
my son."

Then strode a good knight forward,
crying to him,
"A boon, Sir King! I am her kins-
man, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay 370
the man."

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal,
and cried,
"A boon, Sir King! ev'n that thou
grant her none,
This railer, that hath mock'd thee in
full hall —
None; or the wholesome boon of gyve
and gag."

But Arthur, "We sit King, to help 380
the wrong'd
Thro' all our realm. The woman loves
her lord.
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves
and hates!
The kings of old had doom'd thee to
the flames,
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged
thee dead,
And Uther slit thy tongue: but get 385
thee hence —
Lest that rough humor of the kings of
old
Return upon me! Thou that art her
kin,
Go likewise; lay him low and slay
him not,
But bring him here, that I may judge
the right,
According to the justice of the King: 390
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless
King
Who lived and died for men, the man
shall die."

Then came in hall the messenger of
Mark,
A name of evil savor in the land,
The Cornish king. In either hand he 395
bore
What dazzled all, and shone far-off as
shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers, a cloth of palest
gold,
Which down he laid before the throne,
and knelt,
Delivering, that his lord, the vassal 400
king,
Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot;

For having heard that Arthur of his
grace
Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,
knight,
And, for himself was of the greater
state,
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord 405
Would yield him this large honor all
the more;
So pray'd him well to accept this cloth
of gold,
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth,
to rend
In pieces, and so cast it on the 410
hearth.
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. "The
goodly knight!
What! shall the shield of Mark stand
among these?"
For, midway down the side of that long
hall
A stately pile, — whereof along the
front,
Some blazon'd, some but carven, and 415
some blank,
There ran a treble range of stony
shields, —
Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the
hearth.
And under every shield a knight was
named:
For this was Arthur's custom in his
hall;
When some good knight had done one 420
noble deed,
His arms were carven only; but if
twain
His arms were blazon'd also; but if
none
The shield was blank and bare without
a sign
Saving the name beneath; and Gareth
saw
The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich and 425
bright,
And Modred's blank as death; and
Arthur cried
To rend the cloth and cast it on the
hearth.

"More like are we to reave him of
his crown
Than make him knight because men
call him king.
The kings we found, ye know we 430
stay'd their hands
From war among themselves, but left
them kings;
Of whom were any bounteous, merci-
ful,
Truth-speaking, brave, good livers,
them we enroll'd
Among us, and they sit within our
hall.

But Mark hath tarnish'd the great⁴²⁰
 name of king,
 As Mark would sully the low state of
 churl:
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of
 gold,
 Return, and meet, and hold him from
 our eyes,
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of
 lead,
 Silenced for ever—craven—a man⁴⁴⁰
 of plots,
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside
 ambushings—
 No fault of thine: let Kay the senes-
 chal
 Look to thy wants, and send thee sat-
 isfied—
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the
 hand be seen!"

And many another suppliant crying⁴⁴⁰
 came
 With words of ravage wrought by
 beast and man,
 And evermore a knight would ride
 away.

Last, Gareth leaning both hands
 heavily
 Down on the shoulders of the twain,
 his men,
 Approach'd between them toward the⁴⁴⁰
 King, and ask'd,
 "A boon, Sir King (his voice was all
 ashamed),
 For see ye not how weak and hunger-
 worn
 I seem—leaning on these? grant me
 to serve
 For meat and drink among thy
 kitchen-knaves
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek⁴⁴⁰
 my name.
 Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King,
 "A goodly youth and worth a good-
 lier boon!
 But so thou wilt no goodlier, then
 must Kay,
 The master of the meats and drinks,⁴⁶⁰
 be thine."

He rose and past; then Kay, a man
 of mien
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels
 itself
 Root-bitten by white lichen,

"Lo ye now!
 This fellow hath broken from some
 Abbey, where,
 God wot, he had not beef and brewis
 enow,

However that might chance! but an
 he work,
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
 And sleeker shall he shine than any
 hog."

Then Lancelot standing near, "Sir⁴⁷⁰
 Seneschal,
 Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,
 and all the hounds;
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost
 not know:
 Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair
 and fine,
 High nose, a nostril large and fine,
 and hands
 Large, fair and fine!—some young⁴⁸⁰
 lad's mystery—
 But, or from sheepcot or king's hall,
 the boy
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all
 grace,
 Lest he should come to shame thy
 judging of him."

Then Kay, "What murmurest thou
 of mystery?
 Think ye this fellow will poison the⁴⁸⁰
 King's dish?
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like:
 mystery!
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had
 ask'd
 For horse and armor: fair and fine,
 forsooth!
 Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see
 thou to it
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot,⁴⁸⁰
 some fine day
 Undo thee not—and leave my man
 to me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent
 The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassalage;
 Ate with young lads his portion by
 the door,⁴⁹⁰
 And couch'd at night with grimy
 kitchen-knaves.
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleas-
 antly,
 But Kay the seneschal who loved him
 not
 Would hustle and harry him, and
 labor him
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth,
 and set
 To turn the broach, draw water, or⁴⁹⁰
 hew wood,
 Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd
 himself
 With all obedience to the King, and
 wrought
 All kind of service with a noble
 ease
 That graced the lowliest act in doing
 it.

And when the thralls had talk among
 themselves,
 And one would praise the love that
 linkt the King
 And Lancelot—how the King had
 saved his life
 In battle twice, and Lancelot once the
 King's—
 For Lancelot was the first in Tourna-
 ment,
 But Arthur mightiest on the battle-
 field—
 Gareth was glad. Or if some other
 told,
 How once the wandering forester at
 dawn,
 Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
 On Caer-Eryri's highest found the
 King,
 A naked babe, of whom the Prophet
 spake,
 "He passes to the Isle Avilion,
 He passes and is heal'd and cannot
 die"—
 Gareth was glad. But if their talk
 were foul,
 Then would he whistle rapid as any
 lark,
 Or carol some old roundelay, and so
 loud
 That first they mock'd, but, after,
 revered him.
 Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
 Of knights, who sliced a red life-bub-
 bling way
 Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,
 held
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good
 mates
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,
 would come
 Blustering upon them, like a sudden
 wind
 Among dead leaves, and drive them
 all apart.
 Or when the thralls had sport among
 themselves,
 So there were any trial of mastery,
 He, by two yards in casting bar or
 stone
 Was counted best; and if there
 chanced a joust,
 So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
 Would hurry thither, and when he
 saw the knights
 Clash like the coming and retiring
 wave,
 And the spear spring, and good horse
 reel, the boy
 Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among
 the thralls;
 But in the weeks that follow'd, the
 good Queen,

Repentant of the word she made him
 swear,
 And saddening in her childless castle,
 sent,
 Between the in-crescent and de-cres-
 cent moon,
 Arms for her son, and loosed him from
 his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire
 of Lot
 With whom he used to play at tourney
 once,
 When both were children, and in
 lonely haunts
 Would scratch a ragged oval on the
 sand,
 And each at either dash from either
 end—
 Shame never made girl redder than
 Gareth joy.
 He laugh'd; he sprang. "Out of the
 smoke, at once
 I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's
 knee—
 These news be mine, none other's—
 nay, the King's—
 Descend into the city:" whereon he
 sought
 The King alone, and found, and told
 him all.

"I have stagger'd thy strong Ga-
 wain in a tilt
 For pastime; yea, he said it: joust
 can I.
 Make me thy knight—in secret! let
 my name
 Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest,
 I spring
 Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye
 Fell on, and check'd, and made him
 flush, and bow
 Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd
 him,
 "Son, the good mother let me know
 thee here,
 And sent her wish that I would yield
 thee thine.
 Make thee my knight? my knights
 are sworn to vows
 Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
 And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
 And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from
 his knees,
 "My King, for hardihood I can prom-
 ise thee.
 For uttermost obedience make de-
 mand
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
 No mellow master of the meats and
 drinks!

And as for love, God wot, I love not ⁵⁷
 yet,
 But love I shall, God willing."

And the King —
 "Make thee my knight in secret? yea,
 but he,
 Our noblest brother, and our truest
 man,
 And one with me in all, he needs ⁵⁸
 must know."

"Let Lancelot know, my King, let
 Lancelot know,
 Thy noblest and thy truest!"

And the King —
 "But wherefore would ye men should
 wonder at you?
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their
 King,
 And the deed's sake my knighthood
 do the deed,
 Than to be noised of."

Merrily Gareth ask'd,
 "Have I not earn'd my cake in baking
 of it?
 Let be my name until I make my ⁵⁹
 name!
 My deeds will speak: it is but for a
 day."
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's
 arm
 Smiled the great King, and half-
 unwillingly
 Loving his lusty youthhood yielded
 to him.
 Then, after summoning Lancelot ⁶⁰
 privily,
 "I have given him the first quest: he
 is not proven.
 Look therefore when he calls for this
 in hall,
 Thou get to horse and follow him far
 away.
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en ⁶¹
 nor slain."

Then that same day there past into
 the hall
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow
 May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-
 blossom,
 Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slen-
 der nose
 Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower; ⁶²
 She into hall past with her page and
 cried,

"O King, for thou hast driven the
 foe without,
 See to the foe within! bridge, ford,
 beset

By bandits, everyone that owns a
 tower
 The Lord for half a league. Why sit ⁶³
 ye there?
 Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were
 king,
 Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as
 free
 From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-
 cloth
 From that best blood it is a sin to
 spill."

"Comfort thyself," said Arthur, "I
 nor mine
 Rest: so my knighthood keep the
 vows they swore,
 The wastest moorland of our realm
 shall be
 Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
 What is thy name? thy need?"

"My name?" she said —
 "Lynette my name; noble; my need, ⁶⁴
 a knight
 To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
 A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
 And comely, yea, and comelier than
 myself.
 She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
 Runs in three loops about her living-
 place; ⁶⁵
 And o'er it are three passings, and
 three knights
 Defend the passings, brethren, and a
 fourth
 And of that four the mightiest, holds
 her stay'd
 In her own castle, and so besieges her
 To break her will, and make her wed
 with him:
 And but delays his purport till thou
 send
 To do the battle with him, thy chief
 man
 Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to over-
 throw,
 Then wed, with glory: but she will
 not wed
 Save whom she loveth, or a holy life. ⁶⁶
 Now therefore have I come for
 Lancelot."

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth
 ask'd,
 "Damsel, ye know this Order lives to
 crush
 All wrongers of the Realm. But say,
 these four,
 Who be they? What the fashion of ⁶⁷
 the men?"

"They be of foolish fashion, O Sir
 King,
 The fashion of that old knight-
 errantry

Who ride abroad and do but what
they will;
Courteous or bestial from the moment,
such
As have nor law nor king; and three ⁶⁶⁵
of these
Proud in their fantasy call themselves
the Day,
Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and
Evening-Star,
Being strong fools; and never a whit
more wise
The fourth who alway rideth arm'd
in black,
A huge man-beast of boundless sav-⁶⁷⁰
agery.
He names himself the Night, and
oftener Death,
And wears a helmet mounted with a
skull,
And bears a skeleton figured on his
arms,
To show that who may slay or scape
the three
Slain by himself shall enter endless ⁶⁷⁵
night.
And all these four be fools, but mighty
men,
And therefore am I come for Lance-
lot."

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where
he rose,
A head with kindling eyes above the
throng,
"A boon, Sir King — this quest!" ⁶⁸⁰
then — for he mark'd
Kay near him groaning like a wounded
bull —
"Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-
knave am I,
And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
am I,
And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King," and Arthur glanc-⁶⁸⁵
ing at him,
Brought down a momentary brow.
"Rough, sudden,
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—
Go, therefore," and all hearers were
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,
pride, wrath
Slew the May-white: she lifted either ⁶⁹⁰
arm,
"Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy
chief knight,
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-
knave."
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,
turn'd,
Fled down the lane of access to the
King,
Took horse, descended the slope street, ⁶⁹⁵
and past

The weird white gate, and paused with-
out, beside
The field of tourney, murmuring
"kitchen-knave."

Now two great entries open'd from
the hall,
At one end one, that gave upon a
range
Of level pavement where the King ⁶⁹⁸
would pace
At sunrise, gazing over plain and
wood;
And down from this a lordly stairway
sloped
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of
towers;
And out by this main doorway past
the King.
But one was counter to the hearth, ⁷⁰⁰
and rose
High that the highest-crested helm
could ride
Therethro' nor graze: and by this entry
fled
The damsel in her wrath, and on to
this
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without
the door
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half ⁷⁰⁵
a town,
A warhorse of the best, and near it
stood
The two that out of north had fol-
low'd him:
This bare a maiden shield, a casque;
that held
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir
Gareth loosed
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone ⁷¹⁰
to heel,
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it
down,
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,
That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and
flash'd as those
Dull-coated things, that making slide
apart
Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath ⁷¹⁵
there burns
A jewell'd harness, ere they pass and
fly.
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in
arms.
Then as he donn'd the helm, and took
the shield
And mounted horse and graspt a
spear, of grain
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site, ⁷²⁰
and tipt
With trenchant steel, around him
slowly prest
The people, while from out of kitchen
came
The thralls in throng, and seeing who
had work'd

Lustier than any, and whom they could
but love,
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps 7,0
and cried,
"God bless the King, and all his
fellowship!"
And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth
rode
Down the slope street, and past with-
out the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the
cur
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, 7,0
ere his cause
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being
named,
His owner, but remembers all, and
grows
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the
door
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he
used
To harry and hustle. 7,0

"Bound upon a quest
With horse and arms — the King hath
past his time —
My scullion knave! Thralls to your
work again,
For an your fire be low ye kindle
mine!
Will there be dawn in West and eve 7,0
in East?
Begone! — my knave! — belike and
like enow
Some old head-blow not heeded in his
youth
So shook his wits they wander in his
prime —
Crazed! how the villain lifted up his
voice,
Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen- 7,0
knave.
Tut: he was tame and meek enow with
me,
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's
noticing.
Well — I will after my loud knave,
and learn
Whether he know me for his master
yet.
Out of the smoke he came, and so my 7,0
lance
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into
the mire —
Thence, if the King awoken from his
craze,
Into the smoke again."

But Lancelot said,
"Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against 7,0
the King,
For that did never he whereon ye rail,
But ever meekly served the King in
thee?"

Abide: take counsel; for this lad is
great
And lusty, and knowing both of lance
and sword."
"Tut, tell not me," said Kay, "ye are 7,0
overfine
To mar stout knaves with foolish
courtesies:"
Then mounted, on thro' silent faces
rode
Down the slope city, and out beyond
the gate.

But by the field of tourney linger-
ing yet
Mutter'd the damsel, "Wherefore did 7,0
the King
Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot
lackt, at least
He might have yielded to me one of
those
Who tilt for lady's love and glory
here,
Rather than — O sweet heaven! O
fie upon him —
His kitchen-knave." 7,0

To whom Sir Gareth drew
(And there were none but few goodlier
than he)
Shining in arms, "Damsel, the quest
is mine.
Lead, and I follow." She thereat, as
one
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the 7,0
bolt,
And deems it carrion of some wood-
land thing,
Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender
nose
With petulant thumb and finger,
shrilling, "Hence!
Avoid, thou smell'st all of kitchen-
grease.
And look who comes behind," for 7,0
there was Kay.
"Knowest thou not me? thy master?
I am Kay.
We lack thee by the hearth."

And Gareth to him,
"Master no more! too well I know
thee, ay —
The most ungentle knight in Arthur's 7,0
hall."
"Have at thee then," said Kay: they
shock'd, and Kay
Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried
again,
"Lead, and I follow," and fast away
she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to
fly
Behind her, and the heart of her good 7,0
horse

Was nigh to burst with violence of the
beat,
Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken
spoke.

"What doest thou, scullion, in my
fellowship?
Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught
the more?
Or love thee better, that by some
device
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappi-
ness,
Thou hast overthrown and slain thy
master — thou! —
Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!
— to me
Thou smellest all of kitchen as be-
fore."

"Damsel," Sir Gareth answer'd
gently, "say
Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye
say,
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
Or die therefore."

"Ay, wilt thou finish it?
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he
talks!
The listening rogue hath caught the
manner of it.
But, knave, anon thou shalt be met
with, knave,
And then by such a one that thou for
all
The kitchen brewis that was ever sutt
Shalt not once dare to look him in the
face."

"I shall assay," said Gareth with a
smile
That madden'd her, and away she
flash'd again
Down the long avenues of a boundless
wood,
And Gareth following was again be-
knaved.

"Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd
the only way
Where Arthur's men are set along the
wood;
The wood is nigh as full of thieves as
leaves:
If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but
yet,
Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit
of thine?
Fight, an thou canst: I have miss'd
the only way."

So till the dusk that follow'd even-
song
Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;
Then after one long slope was
mounted, saw,

Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thou-
sand pines
A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink
To westward — in the deeps whereof
a mere,
Round as the red eye of an Eagle-
owl,
Under the half-dead sunset glared;
and shouts
Ascended, and there brake a serving-
man
Flying from out the black wood, and
crying,
"They have bound my lord to cast
him in the mere."
Then Gareth, "Bound am I to right
the wrong'd,
But straitlier bound am I to bide with
thee."
And when the damsel spake contemp-
tuously,
"Lead, and I follow," Gareth cried
again,
"Follow, I lead!" so down among the
pines
He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd
nigh the mere,
And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and
reed,
Saw six tall men haling a seventh
along,
A stone about his neck to drown him
in it.
Three with good blows he quieted, but
three
Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed
the stone
From off his neck, then in the mere
beside
Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the
mere.
Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on
free feet
Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's
friend.

"Well that ye came, or else these
caitiff rogues
Had wreak'd themselves on me; good
cause is theirs
To hate me, for my wont hath ever
been
To catch my thief, and then like ver-
min here
Drown him, and with a stone about
his neck;
And under this wan water many of
them
Lie rotting, but at night let go the
stone,
And rise, and flickering in a grimly
light
Dance on the mere. Good now, ye
have saved a life
Worth somewhat as the cleanser of
this wood.

And fain would I reward thee worship-
fully.
What guerdon will ye ? ”

Gareth sharply spake,
“None! for the deed’s sake have I
done the deed,
In uttermost obedience to the King.
But wilt thou yield this damsel har-
borage ? ”

Whereat the Baron saying, “I well
believe
You be of Arthur’s Table,” a light
laugh
Broke from Lynette, “Ay, truly of a
truth,
And in a sort, being Arthur’s kitchen-
knave! —
But deem not I accept thee aught the
more,
Scullion, for running sharply with thy
spit
Down on a rout of craven foresters.
A thresher with his flail had scatter’d
them.
Nay — for thou smellest of the kitchen
still.
But an this lord will yield us harbor-
age,
Well.”

So she spake. A league beyond
the wood,
All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
His towers where that day a feast had
been
Held in high wall, and many a viand
left,
And many a costly cate, received the
three.
And there they placed a peacock in
his pride
Before the damsel, and the Baron,
set
Gareth beside her, but at once she
rose.

“Meseems, that here is much dis-
courtesy,
Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my
side.
Hear me — this morn I stood in
Arthur’s hall,
And pray’d the King would grant me
Lancelot
To fight the brotherhood of Day and
Night —
The last a monster unsubduable
Of any save of him for whom I
call’d —
Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-
knave,
‘The quest is mine; thy kitchen-
knave am I,
And mighty thro’ thy meats and
drinks am I.’

Then Arthur all at once gone mad
replies,
‘Go therefore,’ and so gives the quest
to him —
Him — here — a villain fitter to stick
swine
Than ride abroad redressing women’s
wrong,
Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.”

Then half-ashamed and part-
amazed, the lord
Now look’d at one and now at other,
left
The damsel by the peacock in his
pride,
And, seating Gareth at another board,
Sat down beside him, ate and then
began.

“Friend, whether thou be kitchen-
knave, or not,
Or whether it be the maiden’s fantasy,
And whether she be mad, or else the
King,
Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
I ask not: but thou strikest a strong
stroke,
For strong thou art and goodly there-
withal,
And savor of my life; and therefore
now,
For here be mighty men to joust with,
weigh
Whether thou wilt not with thy dam-
sel back
To crave again Sir Lancelot of the
King.
Thy pardon; I but speak for thine
avail,
The savor of my life.”

And Gareth said,
“Full pardon, but I follow up the
quest,
Despite of Day and Night and Death
and Hell.”

So when, next morn, the lord whose
life he saved
Had, some brief space, convey’d them
on their way
And left them with God-speed, Sir
Gareth spake,
“Lead, and I follow.” Haughtily she
replied,

“I fly no more: I allow thee for an
hour.
Lion and stoat have isled together,
knave,
In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,
methinks
Some ruth is mine for thee. Back
wilt thou, fool ?
For hard by here is one will overthrow

And slay thee : then will I to court
again,
And shame the King for only yielding
me
My champion from the ashes of his
hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd courteously,
"Say thou thy say, and I will do my
deed.
Allow me for mine hour, and thou
wilt find
My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay
Among the ashes and wedded the
King's son."

Then to the shore of one of those
long loops
Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd,
they came.
Rough-thicketed were the banks and
steep; the stream
Full, narrow; this a bridge of single
arc
Took at a leap; and on the further
side
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily
in hue,
Save that the dome was purple, and
above,
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
And therefore the lawless warrior
paced
Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is
this he,
The champion thou hast brought from
Arthur's hall?
For whom we let thee pass." "Nay,
nay," she said,
"Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter
scorn
Of thee and thy much folly hath sent
thee here
His kitchen-knave : and look thou to
thyself :
See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
And slay thee unarm'd : he is not
knight but knave."

Then at his call, "O daughters of
the Dawn,
And servants of the Morning-Star,
approach,
Arm me," from out the silken curtain-
folds
Bare-footed and bare-headed three
fair girls
In gilt and rosy raiment came : their
feet
In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the
hair
All over glanced with dewdrop or with
gem
Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.

These arm'd him in blue arms, and
gave a shield
Blue also, and thereon the morning
star.
And Gareth silent gazed upon the
knight,
Who stood a moment ere his horse
was brought,
Glorying; and in the stream beneath
him, shone
Immingled with Heaven's azure wav-
eringly,
The gay pavilion and the naked
feet,
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the
star.

Then she that watch'd him,
"Wherefore stare ye so?
Thou shakest in thy fear : there yet is
time :
Flee down the valley before he get to
horse.
Who will cry shame ? Thou art not
knight but knave."

Said Gareth, "Damsel, whether
knave or knight,
Far liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and re-
vile.
Fair words were best for him who
fights for thee ;
But truly foul are better, for they
send
That strength of anger thro' mine
arms, I know
That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore
The star, being mounted, cried from
o'er the bridge,
"A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn
of me !
Such fight not I, but answer scorn
with scorn.
For this were shame to do him further
wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his
horse
And arms, and so return him to the
King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly,
knave.
Avoid : for it beseemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest.
I spring from loftier lineage than
thine own."
He spake, and all at fiery speed the
two
Shock'd on the central bridge, and
either spear
Bent not brake, and either knight
at once,

Hurl'd as a stone from out of a cata-
pult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the
bridge,
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and
drew,
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his *85b*
brand
He drave his enemy backward down
the bridge,
The damsel crying, "Well-stricken,
kitchen-knave!"
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but
one stroke
Laid him that clove it grovelling on
the ground.

Then cried the fall'n, "Take not my *85c*
life: I yield."
And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it
of me
Good—I accord it easily as a grace."
She reddening, "Insolent scullion: I
of thee?
I bound to thee for any favor ask'd!"
"Then shall he die." And Gareth *86a*
there unlaced
His helmet as to slay him, but she
shriek'd,
"Be not so hardy, scullion, as to
slay
One nobler than thyself." "Damsel,
thy charge
Is an abounding pleasure to me.
Knight,
Thy life is thine at her command. *86b*
Arise
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall,
and say
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee.
See thou crave
His pardon for thy breaking of his
laws.
Myself, when I return, will plead for
thee.
Thy shield is mine—farewell; and, *87a*
damsel, thou,
Lead, and I follow."

And fast away she fled.
Then when he came upon her, spake,
"Methought,
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking
on the bridge
The savor of thy kitchen came upon
me
A little faintlier: but the wind hath
changed:
I scent it twenty-fold." And then she
sang,
"O morning star' (not that tall felon
there
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
Or some device, hast foully over-*87b*
thrown),

O morning star that smilest in the
blue,
O star, my morning dream hath
proven true,
Smile sweetly, thou! my love hath
smiled on me."

"But thou begone, take counsel,
and away,
For hard by here is one that guards a
ford—
The second brother in their fool's
parable—
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to
boot.
Care not for shame: thou art not
knight but knave."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd,
laughingly,
"Parables? Hear a parable of the *90b*
knave.
When I was kitchen-knave among the
rest
Fierce was the hearth, and one of my
co-mates
Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast
his coat,
'Guard it,' and there was none to
meddle with it.
And such a coat art thou, and thee *9*
the King
Gave me to guard, and such a dog
am I,
To worry, and not to flee—and—
knight or knave—
The knave that doth thee service as
full knight
Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
Toward thy sister's freeing." *91b*

"Ay, Sir Knave!
Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a
knight,
Being but knave, I hate thee all the
more."

"Fair damsel, you should worship
me the more,
That, being but knave, I throw thine
enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said, "but thou shalt
meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second
river-loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in
mail
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-
day Sun
Beyond a raging shallow. As if the *92b*
flower,
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd
the fierce shield,

All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying
 blots
 Before them when he turn'd from
 watching him.
 He from beyond the roaring shallow
 roar'd,
 "What doest thou, brother, in my
 marches here?"
 And she athwart the shallow shrill'd
 again,
 "Here is a kitchen-knave from
 Arthur's hall
 Hath overthrown thy brother, and
 hath his arms."
 "Ugh!" cried the Sun, and vizoring 980
 up a red
 And cipher face of rounded foolish-
 ness,
 Push'd horse across the foamings of
 the ford,
 Whom Gareth met midstream: no
 room was there
 For lance or tourney-skill: four
 strokes they struck
 With sword, and these were mighty;
 the new knight
 Had fear he might be shamed; but as
 the Sun
 Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike
 the fifth,
 The hoof of his horse slipt in the
 stream, the stream
 Descended, and the Sun was wash'd
 away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart 940
 the ford;
 So drew him home; but he that fought
 no more,
 As being all bone-batter'd on the rock,
 Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the
 King.
 "Myself when I return will plead for
 thee."
 "Lead, and I follow." Quietly she
 led.
 "Hath not the good wind, damsel,
 changed again?"
 "Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor
 here.
 There lies a ridge of slate across the
 ford;
 His horse thereon stumbled — ay, for
 I saw it.

"O Sun' (not this strong fool 900
 whom thou, Sir Knave,
 Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappi-
 ness),
 'O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or
 pain,
 O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
 Shine sweetly: twice my love hath
 smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of lovesong
 or of love?
 Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly
 born,
 Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea,
 perchance, —

"O dewy flowers that open to the
 sun,
 O dewy flowers that close when day is
 done,
 Blow sweetly: twice my love hath
 smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, 960
 except, belike,
 To garnish meats with? hath not our
 good King
 Who lent me thee, the flower of
 kitchendom,
 A foolish love for flowers? what stick
 ye round
 The pasty? wherewithal deck the
 boar's head?
 Flowers? nay, the boar hath rose-
 maries and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morn-
 ing sky,
 O birds that warble as the day goes
 by,
 Sing sweetly: twice my love hath,
 smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of birds, lark,
 mavis, merle,
 Linnet? what dream ye when they 970
 utter forth
 May-music growing with the growing
 light,
 Their sweet sun-worship? these be for
 the snare
 (So runs thy fancy) these be for the
 spit,
 Larding and basting. See thou have
 not now
 Larded thy last, except thou turn and
 fly.
 There stands the third fool of their
 allegory."

For there beyond a bridge of treble
 bow,
 All in a rose-red from the west, and
 all
 Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the
 broad
 Deep-dimpled current underneath, the 980
 knight,
 That named himself the Star of
 Evening, stood.

And Gareth, "Wherefore waits the
 madman there
 Naked in open dayshine?" "Nay,"
 she cried,

"Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd
skins
That fit him like his own; and so ye
cleave
His armor off him, these will turn the
blade."

Then the third brother shouted o'er
the bridge,
"O brother-star, why shine ye here so
low?
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye
slain
The damsel's champion?" and the
damsel cried,

"No star of thine, but shot from
Arthur's heaven
With all disaster unto thine and thee!
For both thy younger brethren have
gone down
Before this youth; and so wilt thou,
Sir Star;
Art thou not old?"

"Old, damsel, old and hard,
Old, with the might and breath of
twenty boys."
Said Gareth, "Old, and over-bold in
brag!
But that same strength which threw
the Morning Star
Can throw the Evening."

Then that other blew
A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
"Approach and arm me!" With slow
steps from out
An old storm-beaten, russet, many-
stain'd
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel
came,
And arm'd him in old arms, and
brought a helm
With but a drying evergreen for crest,
And gave a shield whereon the Star of
Even
Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his
emblem, shone.
But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-
bow,
They madly hurl'd together on the
bridge;
And Gareth overthrew him, lighted,
drew,
There met him drawn, and overthrew
him again,
But up like fire he started: and as
oft
As Gareth brought him grovelling on
his knees,
So many a time he vaulted up again;
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great
heart,
Foredooming all his trouble was in
vain,

Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as
one
That all in later, sadder age begins
To war against ill uses of a life,
But these from all his life arise, and
cry,
"Thou hast made us lords, and canst
not put us down!"
He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to
strike
Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the
while,
"Well done, knave-knight, well
stricken, O good knight-
knave—
O knave, as noble as any of all the
knights—
Shame me not, shame me not. I have
prophesied—
Strike, thou art worthy of the Table
Round—
His arms are old, he trusts the hard-
en'd skin—
Strike—strike—the wind will never
change again."
And Gareth hearing ever stronglier
smote,
And hew'd great pieces of his armor
off him,
But lash'd in vain against the harden'd
skin,
And could not wholly bring him
under, more
Than loud Southwesterns, rolling
ridge on ridge,
The buoy that rides at sea, and dips
and springs
For ever; till at length Sir Gareth's
brand
Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the
hilt.
"I have thee now;" but forth that
other sprang,
And, all unknightlike, writhed his
wiry arms
Around him, till he felt, despite his
mail,
Strangled, but straining ev'n his utter-
most
Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er
the bridge
Down to the river, sink or swim, and
cried,
"Lead, and I follow."

But the damsel said,
"I lead no longer; ride thou at my
side;
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-
knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy
plain,
O rainbow with three colors after rain,
Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath
smiled on me."

"Sir, — and, good faith, I fain had
 added — Knight,
 But that I heard thee call thyself a
 knave, —
 Shamed am I that I so rebuked,
 reviled,
 Missaid thee; noble I am; and
 thought the King
 Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy
 pardon, friend,
 For thou hast ever answer'd cour-
 teously,
 And wholly bold thou art, and meek
 withal
 As any of Arthur's best, but, being
 knave,
 Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what
 thou art.

"Damsel," he said, "you be not all
 to blame,
 Saving that you mistrusted our good
 King
 Would handle scorn, or yield you,
 asking, one
 Not fit to cope your quest. You said
 your say;
 Mine answer was my deed. Good
 sooth! I hold
 He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,
 nor meet
 To fight for gentle damsel, he, who
 lets
 His heart be stirr'd with any foolish
 heat
 At any gentle damsel's waywardness.
 Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings
 fought for me:
 And seeing now thy words are fair,
 methinks
 There rides no knight, not Lancelot,
 his great self,
 Hath force to quell me."

Nigh upon that hour
 When the lone hern forgets his mel-
 ancholy,
 Lets down his other leg, and stretch-
 ing, dreams
 Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
 Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling
 at him,
 And told him of a cavern hard at
 hand,
 Where bread and baken meats and
 good red wine
 Of Southland, which the Lady Lyo-
 nors
 Had sent her coming champion, waited
 him.

Anon they past a narrow comb
 wherein
 Were slabs of rock with figures,
 knights on horse

Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-wan-
 ing hues.

"Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once
 was here,
 Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on
 the rock
 The war of Time against the soul of
 man.
 And yon four fools have suck'd their
 allegory
 From these damp walls, and taken
 but the form.
 Know ye not these?" and Gareth
 lookt and read —
 In letters like to those the vexillary
 Hath left crag-carven o'er the stream-
 ing Gelt —
 "PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIES" —
 "HESPERUS" —
 "Nox" — "MORS," beneath five fig-
 ures, armed men,
 Slab after slab, their faces forward
 all,
 And running down the Soul, a Shape
 that fled
 With broken wings, torn raiment and
 loose hair,
 For help and shelter to the hermit's
 cave.
 "Follow the faces, and we find it.
 Look,
 Who comes behind?"

For one — delay'd at first
 Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
 To Camelot, then by what thereafter
 chanced,
 The damsel's headlong error thro' the
 wood —
 Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-
 loops —
 His blue shield-lions cover'd — softly
 drew
 Behind the twain, and when he saw
 the star
 Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to
 him, cried,
 "Stay, felon-knight, I avenge me for
 my friend."
 And Gareth crying prick'd against the
 cry;
 But when they closed — in a moment
 — at one touch
 Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of
 the world —
 Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
 That when he found the grass within
 his hands
 He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon
 Lynette:
 Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and
 overthrown,
 And tumbled back into the kitchen-
 knave,
 Why laugh ye? that ye blew your
 boast in vain?"

"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the
son
Of old King Lot and good Queen Bel-
licent,
And victor of the bridges and the ford,
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown
by whom
I know not, all thro' mere unhappi-
ness —
Device and sorcery and unhappi-
ness —
Out, sword; we are thrown!" And 990
Lancelot answer'd, "Prince,
O Gareth — thro' the mere unhappi-
ness
Of one who came to help thee, not to
harm,
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee
whole,
As on the day when Arthur knighted
him."

Then Gareth, "Thou — Lancelot!
— thine the hand
That threw me? An some chance to
mar the boast
Thy brethren of thee make — which
could not chance —
Had sent thee down before a lesser
spear,
Shamed had I been, and sad — O
Lancelot — thou!"

Whereat the maiden, petulant, 1000
"Lancelot,
Why came ye not, when call'd? and
wherefore now
Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my
knave,
Who being still rebuked, would answer
still
Courteous as any knight — but now,
if knight,
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd
and trick'd,
And only wondering wherefore play'd
upon:
And doubtful whether I and mine be
scorn'd.
Where should be truth if not in
Arthur's hall,
In Arthur's presence? Knight,
knave, prince and fool,
I hate thee and for ever." 1010

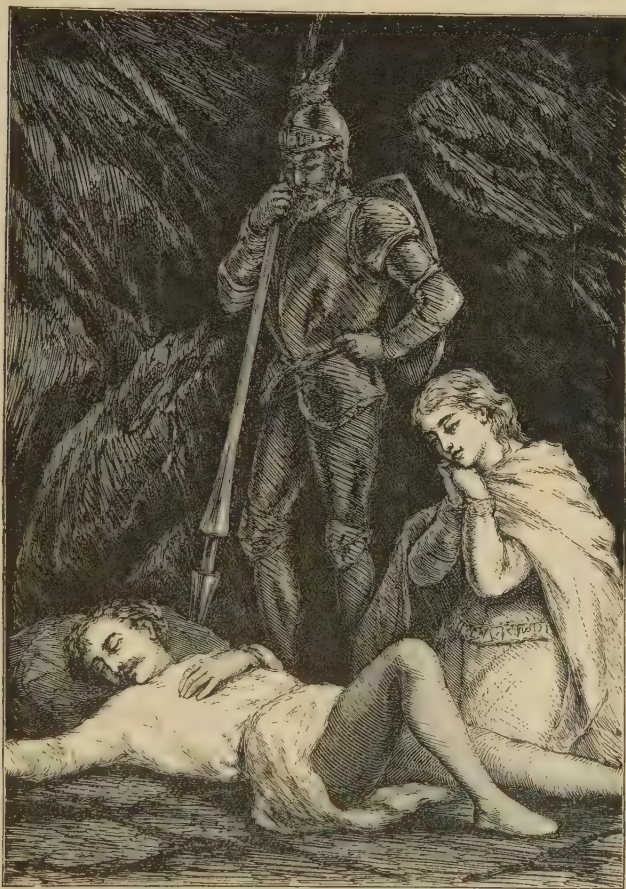
And Lancelot said,
"Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight
art thou
To the King's best wish. O damsel,
be you wise
To call him shamed, who is but over-
thrown?
Thrown have I been, nor once, but
many a time.
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the
last,

And overthrower from being over-
thrown.
With sword we have not striven; and
thy good horse
And thou are weary; yet not less I
felt
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance 1010
of thine.
Well hast thou done; for all the
stream is freed,
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on
his foes,
And when reviled, hast answer'd
graciously,
And makest merry when overthrown.
Prince, Knight,
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our
Table Round!"

And then when turning to Lynette
he told
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she
said,
"Ay well — ay well — for worse than
being fool'd
Of others, is to fool one's self. A
cave,
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats 1020
and drinks
And forage for the horse, and flint for
fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.
Seek, till we find." And when they
sought and found,
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his
life
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden
gazed.
"Sound sleep be thine! sound cause
to sleep hast thou.
Wake lusty! seem I not as tender to
him
As any mother? Ay, but such a
one
As all day long hath rated at her
child,
And vex'd his day, but blesses him 1030
asleep —
Good lord, how sweetly smells the
honeysuckle
In the hush'd night, as 'if the world
were one
Of utter peace, and love, and gentle-
ness!
O Lancelot, Lancelot" — and she
clapt her hands —
"Full merry am I to find my goodly
knave
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn
have I,
Else yon black felon had not let me
pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle
with him.
Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee
first;

Who doubts thee victor? so will my ¹⁰⁴⁰
 knight-knave
 Miss the full flower of this accom-
 plishment."

Said Lancelot, "Peradventure he,
 you name,
 May know my shield. Let Gareth, ¹⁰⁰⁰
 an he will,



"Sound sleep be thine! sound cause to sleep hast thou."

Change his for mine, and take my
 charger, fresh,
 Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as
 well
 As he that rides him." "Lancelot-
 like," she said,
 "Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as
 in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely
 clutch'd the shield;
 "Ramp ye lance-splintering lions, on
 whom all spears
 Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to
 roar!

Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your
 lord! —
 Care not, good beasts, so well I care
 for you.
 O noble Lancelot, from my hold on
 these
 Streams virtue — fire — thro' one that
 will not shame
 Even the shadow of Lancelot under
 shield.
 Hence: let us go."

Silent the silent field
 They traversed. Arthur's harp tho'
 summer-wan,

In counter motion to the clouds,
allured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on *1068*
his liege.
A star shot: "Lo," said Gareth, "the
foe falls!"
An owl whoopt: "Hark the victor
pealing there!"
Suddenly she that rode upon his left
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent
him, crying,
"Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he
must fight:
I curse the tongue that all thro' yes-
terday
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on
Lancelot now
To lend thee horse and shield: won-
ders ye have done;
Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow
In having flung the three: I see thee *1070*
maim'd,
Mangled: I swear thou canst not fling
the fourth."

"And wherefore, damsel? tell me
all ye know.
You cannot scare me; nor rough face,
or voice,
Brute bulk of limb, or boundless
savagery
Appal me from the quest."

"Nay, Prince," she cried,
"God wot, I never look'd upon the
face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by
day;
But watch'd him have I like a phan-
tom pass
Chilling the night: nor have I heard *1080*
the voice.
Always he made his mouthpiece of a
page
Who came and went, and still re-
ported him
As closing in himself the strength of
ten,
And when his anger tare him, mas-
sacring
Man, woman, lad and girl — yea, the
soft babe!
Some hold that he hath swallow'd
infant flesh,
Monster! O Prince, I went for Lance-
lot first,
The quest is Lancelot's: give him
back the shield."

Said Gareth laughing, "An he fight
for this,
Before he wins it as the better man: *1090*
Thus — and not else!"

But Lancelot on him urged
All the devisings of their chivalry

When one might meet a mightier than
himself;
How best to manage horse, lance,
sword and shield,
And so fill up the gap where force
might fail
With skill and fineness. Instant were
his words.

Then Gareth, "Here be rules. I
know but one —
To dash against mine enemy and to
win.
Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the *1100*
joust,
And seen thy way." "Heaven help
thee," sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud
that grew
To thunder-gloom palling all stars,
they rode
In converse till she made her palfrey
halt,
Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,
"There."
And all the three were silent seeing,
pitch'd
Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the
marge,
Black, with black banner, and a long *1110*
black horn
Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth
graspt,
And so, before the two could hinder
him,
Sent all his heart and breath thro' all
the horn.
Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled;
anon
Came lights and lights, and once again
he blew;
Whereon were hollow tramlings up
and down
And muffled voices heard, and shadows
past;
Till high above him, circled with her
maids,
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
Beautiful among lights, and waving to *1120*
him
White hands, and courtesy; but when
the Prince
Three times had blown — after long
hush — at last —
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
Thro' those black foldings, that which
housed therein.
High on a nightblack horse, in night-
black arms,
With white breast-bone, and barren
ribs of Death,
And crown'd with fleshless laughter —
some ten steps —

In the half-light — thro' the dim dawn
— advanced
The monster, and then paused, and
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indig- 1430
nantly,
"Fool, for thou hast, men say, the
strength of ten,
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy
God hath given,
But must, to make the terror of thee
more,
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries
Of that which Life hath done with,
and the clod,
Less dull than thou, will hide with
mantling flowers
As if for pity?" But he spake no
word;
Which set the horror higher: a maiden
swoon'd;
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands
and wept,
As doom'd to be the bride of Night 1440
and Death;
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his
helmet;
And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm
blood felt
Ice strike, and all that mark'd him
were agast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger,
fiercely neigh'd,
And Death's dark war-horse bounded
forward with him.
Then those that did not blink the
terror, saw
That Death was cast to ground, and
slowly rose.
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split
the skull.
Half fell to right and half to left and
lay.
Then with a stronger buffet he clove 1450
the helmet
As throughly as the skull; and out
from this
Issued the bright face of a blooming
boy
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,
"Knight,
Slay me not: my three brethren bade
me do it,
To make a horror all about the
house,
And stay the world from Lady Lyon-
ors.
They never dream'd the passes would
be past."
Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one
Not many a moon his younger, "My
fair child,
What madness made thee challenge 1460
the chief knight

Of Arthur's hall?" "Fair Sir, they
bade me do it.
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the
King's friend,
They hoped to slay him somewhere
on the stream,
They never dream'd the passes could
be past."

Then sprang the happier day from
underground;
And Lady Lyonors and her house,
with dance
And revel and song, made merry over
Death,
As being after all their foolish fears
And horrors only proven a blooming
boy.
So large mirth lived and Gareth won 1470
the quest.

And he that told the tale in older
times
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

GERAINT AND ENID.

I.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of
Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great Order of the Table
Round,
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light
of Heaven.
And as the light of Heaven varies, now
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by
night
With moon and trembling stars, so
loved Geraint
To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimsons and in purples and in
gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's
eye,
Who first had found and loved her in
a state
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted
him
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen
herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service
done,
Loved her, and often with her own
white hands
Array'd and deck'd her, as the love-
liest,
Next after her own self, in all the
court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with
true heart
Adored her, as the stateliest and the
best

And loveliest of all women upon earth.
 And seeing them so tender and so
 close,
 Long in their common love rejoiced
 Geraint.
 But when a rumor rose about the
 Queen,
 Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
 Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet
 was heard
 The world's loud whisper breaking
 into storm,
 Not less Geraint believed it; and there
 fell
 A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
 Thro' that great tenderness for Guine-
 vere,
 Had suffer'd, or should suffer any
 taint
 In nature: wherefore going to the
 King,
 He made this pretext, that his prince-
 dom lay
 Close on the borders of a territory,
 Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff
 knights,
 Assassins, and all flyers from the hand
 Of Justice, and whatever loathes a
 law:
 And therefore, till the King himself
 should please
 To cleanse this common sewer of all
 his realm,
 He craved a fair permission to depart,
 And there defend his marches; and
 the King
 Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
 Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them, to
 the shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own
 land;
 Where, thinking, that if ever yet was
 wife
 True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
 He compass'd her with sweet observ-
 ances
 And worship, never leaving her, and
 grew
 Forgetful of his promise to the
 King,
 Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
 Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
 Forgetful of his glory and his name,
 Forgetful of his principedom and its
 cares.
 And this forgetfulness was hateful to
 her.
 And by and by the people, when they
 met
 In twos and threes, or fuller com-
 panies,
 Began to scoff and jeer and babble of
 him
 As of a prince whose manhood was all
 gone,

And molten down in mere uxorious-
 ness.
 And this she gather'd from the peo-
 ple's eyes:
 This too the women who attired her
 head,
 To please her, dwelling on his bound-
 less love,
 Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the
 more:
 And day by day she thought to tell
 Geraint,
 But could not out of bashful delicacy;
 While he that watch'd her sadden, was
 the more
 Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last, it chanced that on a summer
 morn
 (They sleeping each by either) the
 new sun
 Beat thro' the blindless casement of
 the room,
 And heated the strong warrior in his
 dreams;
 Who, moving, cast the coverlet
 aside,
 And bared the knotted column of his
 throat,
 The massive square of his heroic
 breast,
 And arms on which the standing
 muscle sloped,
 As slopes a wild brook o'er a little
 stone,
 Running too vehemently to break
 upon it.
 And Enid woke and sat beside the
 couch,
 Admiring him, and thought within
 herself,
 Was ever man so grandly made as
 he?
 Then, like a shadow, past the people's
 talk
 And accusation of uxoriousness
 Across her mind, and bowing over
 him,
 Low to her own heart piteously she
 said:

"O noble breast and all-puissant
 arms,
 Am I the cause, I the poor cause that
 men
 Reproach you, saying all your force
 is gone?
 I *am* the cause, because I dare not
 speak
 And tell him what I think and what
 they say.
 And yet I hate that he should linger
 here;
 I cannot love my lord and not his
 name.

Far liefer had I gird his harness on
him,
And ride with him to battle and stand
by,
And watch his mightful hand striking
great blows
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the
world.
Far better were I laid in the dark
earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear
arms,
And darken'd from the high light in
his eyes,
Than that my lord thro' me should
suffer shame.
Am I so bold, and could I so stand
by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the
strife,
Or maybe pierced to death before
mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I
think,
And how men slur him, saying all his
force
Is melted into mere effeminacy?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she
spoke,
And the strong passion in her made
her weep
True tears upon his broad and naked
breast,
And these awoke him, and by great
mischance
He heard but fragments of her later
words,
And that she fear'd she was not a true
wife.
And then he thought, "In spite of all
my care,
For all my pains, poor man, for all
my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in
Arthur's hall."
Then tho' he loved and revered
her too much
To dream she could be guilty of foul
act,
Right thro' his manful breast darted
the pang
That makes a man, in the sweet face
of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and mis-
erable.
At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out
of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake
and cried,
"My charger and her palfrey;" then
to her,

"I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to
win,
I have not fall'n so low as some would
wish.
And thou, put on thy worst and mean-
est dress
And ride with me." And Enid ask'd,
amazed,
"If Enid errs, let Enid learn her
fault."
But he, "I charge thee, ask not, but
obey."
Then she bethought her of a faded
silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
Wherein she kept them folded rever-
ently
With sprigs of summer laid between
the folds,
She took them, and array'd herself
therein,
Remembering when first he came on
her
Drest in that dress, and how he loved
her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the
dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide
before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
There on a day, he sitting high in
hall,
Before him came a forester of Dean,
Wet from the woods, with notice of a
hart
Taller than all his fellows, milky-
white,
First seen that day: these things he
told the King.
Then the good King gave order to let
blow
His horns for hunting on the morrow
morn.
And when the Queen petition'd for his
leave
To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.
So with the morning all the court were
gone.
But Guinevere lay late into the
morn,
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming
of her love
For Lancelot, and forgetful of the
hunt;
But rose at last, a single maiden with
her,
Took horse, and forded Usk, and
gain'd the wood;
There, on a little knoll beside it,
stay'd

Waiting to hear the hounds; but
 heard instead
 A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince
 Geraint,
 Late also, wearing neither hunting-
 dress
 Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted
 brand,
 Came quickly flashing thro' the shal-
 low ford
 Behind them, and so gallop'd up the
 knoll.
 A purple scarf, at either end whereof
 There swung an apple of the purest
 gold,
 Sway'd round about him, as he gal-
 lop'd up
 To join them, glancing like a dragon-
 fly
 In summer suit and silks of holiday.
 Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and
 she,
 Sweetly and stately, and with all
 grace
 Of womanhood and queenhood,
 answer'd him:
 "Late, late, Sir Prince," she said,
 "later than we!"
 "Yea, noble Queen," he answer'd,
 "and so late
 That I but come like you to see the
 hunt,
 Not join it." "Therefore wait with
 me," she said;
 "For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
 There is good chance that we shall
 hear the hounds:
 Here often they break covert at our
 feet."

And while they listen'd for the dis-
 tant hunt,
 And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
 King Arthur's hound of deepest
 mouth, there rode
 Full slowly by a knight, lady, and
 dwarf;
 Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and
 the knight
 Had vizer up, and show'd a youthful
 face,
 Imperious, and of haughtiest linea-
 ments.
 And Guinevere, not mindful of his
 face
 In the King's hall, desired his name,
 and sent
 Her maiden to demand it of the
 dwarf;
 Who being vicious, old and irritable,
 And doubling all his master's vice of
 pride,
 Made answer sharply that she should
 not know.
 "Then will I ask it of himself," she
 said.

"Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,"
 cried the dwarf;
 "Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak
 of him;"
 And when she put her horse toward
 the knight,
 Struck at her with his whip, and she
 return'd
 Indignant to the Queen; whereat
 Geraint
 Exclaiming, "Surely I will learn the
 name,"
 Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd
 it of him,
 Who answer'd as before; and when
 the Prince
 Had put his horse in motion toward
 the knight,
 Struck at him with his whip, and cut
 his cheek.
 The Prince's blood spirted upon the
 scarf,
 Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive
 hand
 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:
 But he, from his exceeding manful-
 ness
 And pure nobility of temperament,
 Wroth to be wroth at such a worm,
 refrain'd
 From ev'n a word, and so returning
 said:
 "I will avenge this insult, noble
 Queen,
 Done in your maiden's person to your-
 self:
 And I will track this vermin to their
 earths:
 For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt
 To find, at some place I shall come at,
 arms
 On loan, or else for pledge; and, being
 found,
 Then will I fight him, and will break
 his pride,
 And on the third day will again be
 here,
 So that I be not fall'n in fight. Fare-
 well."

"Farewell, fair Prince," answer'd
 the stately Queen.
 "Be prosperous in this journey, as in
 all;
 And may you light on all things that
 you love,
 And live to wed with her whom first
 you love:
 But ere you wed with any, bring your
 bride,
 And I, were she the daughter of a
 king,
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the
 hedge,
 Will clothe her for her bridals like
 the sun."

And Prince Geraint, now thinking
that he heard
The noble hart at bay, now the far
horn,
A little vext at losing of the hunt,
A little at the vile occasion, rode,
By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy
glade

And valley, with fixt eye following
the three.
At last they issued from the world of
wood,
And climb'd upon a fair and even
ridge,
And show'd themselves against the
sky, and sank.



*"Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side whereof,
White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose."*

And thither came Geraint, and under-
neath
Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side
whereof,
White from the mason's hand, a for-
tress rose;
And on one side a castle in decay,
Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry
ravine:
And out of town and valley came a
noise
As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed

Brawling, or like a clamor of the
rooks
At distance, ere they settle for the
night.

And onward to the fortress rode the
three,
And enter'd, and were lost behind the
walls.
"So," thought Geraint, "I have
track'd him to his earth."
And down the long street riding
wearily,

Found every hostel full, and every-
 where
 Was hammer laid to hoof, and the
 hot hiss
 And bustling whistle of the youth
 who scour'd
 His master's armor; and of such a
 one
 He ask'd, "What means the tumult
 in the town?"
 Who told him, scouring still, "The
 sparrow-hawk!"
 Then riding close behind an ancient
 churl,
 Who, smitten by the dusty sloping
 beam,
 Went sweating underneath a sack of
 corn,
 Ask'd yet once more what meant the
 hubbub here?
 Who answer'd gruffly, "Ugh! the
 sparrow-hawk."
 Then riding further past an armorer's,
 Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd
 above his work,
 Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
 He put the self-same query, but the
 man
 Not turning round, nor looking at
 him, said:
 "Friend, he that labors for the spar-
 row-hawk
 Has little time for idle questioners."
 Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden
 spleen:
 "A thousand pips eat up your spar-
 row-hawk!
 Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings
 peck him dead!
 Ye think the rustic cackle of your
 bourg
 The murmur of the world! What is
 it to me?
 O wretched set of sparrows, one and
 all,
 Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-
 hawks!
 Speak, if ye be not like the rest,
 hawk-mad,
 Where can I get me harborage for
 the night?
 And arms, arms, arms to fight my
 enemy? Speak!"
 Whereat the armorer turning all
 amazed
 And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
 Came forward with the helmet yet in
 hand
 And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stran-
 ger knight;
 We hold a tourney here to-morrow
 morn,
 And there is scanty time for half the
 work.
 Arms? truth! I know not: all are
 wanted here.

Harborage? truth, good truth, I know
 not, save,
 It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the
 bridge
 Yonder." He spoke and fell to work
 again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleen-
 ful yet,
 Across the bridge that spann'd the
 dry ravine.
 There musing sat the hoary-headed
 Earl,
 (His dress a suit of fray'd magnifi-
 cence,
 Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and
 said:
 "Whither, fair son?" to whom Ger-
 aint replied,
 "O friend, I seek a harborage for the
 night."
 Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and
 partake
 The slender entertainment of a house
 Once rich, now poor, but ever open-
 door'd."
 "Thanks, venerable friend," replied
 Geraint;
 "So that you do not serve me spar-
 row-hawks
 For supper, I will enter, I will eat
 With all the passion of a twelve
 hours' fast."
 Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-
 headed Earl,
 And answer'd, "Graver cause than
 yours is mine
 To curse this hedgerow thief, the
 sparrow-hawk:
 But in, go in; for save yourself de-
 sire it,
 We will not touch upon him ev'n in
 jest."

Then rode Geraint into the castle
 court,
 His charger trampling many a prickly
 star
 Of sprouted thistle on the broken
 stones.
 He look'd and saw that all was
 ruinous.
 Here stood a shatter'd archway
 plumed with fern;
 And here had fall'n a great part of
 a tower,
 Whole, like a crag that tumbles from
 the cliff,
 And like a crag was gay with wilding
 flowers:
 And high above a piece of turret stair,
 Worn by the feet that now were
 silent, wound
 Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-
 stems

Claspt the gray walls with hairy-
fibred arms,
And suck'd the joining of the stones,
and look'd
A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a
grove.

And while he waited in the castle
court,
The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter,
rang
Clear thro' the open casement of the
hall,
Singing; and as the sweet voice of a
bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird
it is
That sings so delicately clear, and
make
Conjecture of the plumage and the
form;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved
Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at
morn
When first the liquid note beloved of
men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with
green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a
friend,
Or it may be the labor of his hands,
To think or say, "There is the night-
ingale";
So fared it with Geraint, who thought
and said,
"Here, by God's grace, is the one
voice for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang
was one
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid
sang:

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel
and lower the proud;
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine,
storm, and cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love
nor hate.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel
with smile or frown;
With that wild wheel we go not up or
down;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.

"Smile and we smile, the lords of
many lands;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our
own hands;
For man is man and master of his
fate.

"Turn, turn thy wheel above the
staring crowd;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in
the cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love
nor hate."

"Hark, by the bird's song ye may
learn the nest,"
Said Yniol; "enter quickly." Enter-
ing then,
Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen
stones,
The dusky-rafter'd many-cobweb'd
hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim
brocade;
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-
white,
That lightly breaks a faded flower-
sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded
silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought
Geraint,
"Here by God's rood is the one maid
for me."
But none spake word except the hoary
Earl:
"Enid, the good knight's horse stands
in the court;
Take him to stall, and give him corn,
and then
Go to the town and buy us flesh and
wine;
And we will make us merry as we
may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great."

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past
him, fain
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol
caught
His purple scarf, and held, and said,
"Forbear!
Rest! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O
my son,
Endures not that her guest should
serve himself."
And reverencing the custom of the
house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the
stall;
And after went her way across the
bridge,
And reach'd the town, and while the
Prince and Earl
Yet spoke together, came again with
one,
A youth, that following with a costrel
bore
The means of goodly welcome, flesh
and wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to
make them cheer,
And in her veil unfolded, manchet
bread.
And then, because their hall must also
serve
For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and
spread the board,
And stood behind, and waited on the
three.
And seeing her so sweet and service-
able,
Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little
thumb,
That crost the trencher as she laid it
down :
But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his
veins,
Let his eye rove in following, or
rest
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky
hall ;
Then suddenly address the hoary
Earl :

"Fair Host and Earl, I pray your
courtesy ;
This sparrow-hawk, what is he ? tell
me of him.
His name ? but no, good faith, I will
not have it :
For if he be the knight whom late I
saw
Ride into that new fortress by your
town,
White from the mason's hand, then
have I sworn
From his own lips to have it—I am
Geraint
Of Devon—for this morning when the
Queen
Sent her own maiden to demand the
name,
His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen
thing,
Struck at her with his whip, and she
return'd
Indignant to the Queen ; and then I
swore
That I would track this caitiff to his
hold,
And fight and break his pride, and
have it of him.
And all unarm'd I rode, and thought
to find
Arms in your town, where all the men
are mad ;
They take the rustic murmur of their
bourg
For the great wave that echoes round
the world ;
They would not hear me speak : but
if ye know

Where I can light on arms, or if your-
self
Should have them, tell me, seeing I
have sworn
That I will break his pride and learn
his name,
Avenging this great insult done the
Queen."

Then cried Earl Yniol, "Art thou
he indeed,
Geraint, a name far-sounded among
men
For noble deeds ? and truly I, when
first
I saw you moving by me on the
bridge,
Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by
your state
And presence might have guess'd you
one of those
That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.
Nor speak I now from foolish flat-
tery ;
For this dear child hath often heard
me praise
Your feats of arms, and often when I
paused
Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to
hear ;
So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
To noble hearts who see but acts of
wrong :
O never yet had woman such a
pair
Of suitors as this maiden ; first Lim-
ours,
A creature wholly given to brawls and
wine,
Drunk even when he woo'd ; and be
he dead
I know not, but he passed to the wild
land.
The second was your foe, the sparrow-
hawk,
My curse, my nephew—I will not let
his name
Slip from my lips if I can help it—
he,
When I that knew him fierce and tur-
bulent
Refused her to him, then his pride
awoke ;
And since the proud man often is the
mean,
He sow'd a slander in the common ear,
Affirming that his father left him
gold,
And in my charge, which was not ren-
der'd to him ;
Bribed with large promises the men
who served
About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat
broken into
Thro' open doors and hospitality ;

Raised my own town against me in
the night
Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my
house;
From mine own earldom foully ousted
me;
Built that new fort to overawe my
friends,
For truly there are those who love me
yet;
And keeps me in this ruinous castle
here,
Where doubtless he would put me
soon to death,
But that his pride too much despises
me:
And I myself sometimes despise my-
self;
For I have let men be, and have their
way;
Am much too gentle, have not used
my power:
Nor know I whether I be very base
Or very manifold, whether very wise
Or very foolish; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,
I seem to suffer nothing heart or
limb,
But can endure it all most patiently."

"Well said, true heart," replied
Geraint, "but arms,
That if the sparrow-hawk, this
nephew, fight
In next day's tourney I may break
his pride."

And Yniol answer'd, "Arms, indeed,
but old
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince
Geraint,
Are mine, and therefore at thine ask-
ing, thine.
But in this tournament can no man
tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be
there.
Two forks are fixt into the meadow
ground,
And over these is placed a silver
wand,
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest
there.
And this, what knight soever be in
field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew there-
upon,
Who being apt at arms and big of
bone
Has ever won it for the lady with
him,
And toppling over all antagonism
Has earn'd himself the name of spar-
row-hawk.

But thou, that hast no lady, canst not
fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all
bright replied,
Leaning a little toward him, "Thy
leave!
Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never
saw,
Tho' having seen all beauties of our
time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so
fair.
And if I fall her name will yet remain
Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,
So aid me Heaven when at mine ut-
termost,
As I will make her truly my true
wife."

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's
heart
Danced in his bosom, seeing better
days.
And looking round he saw not Enid
there,
(Who hearing her own name had
stol'n away)
But that old dame, to whom full ten-
derly
And fondling all her hand in his he
said,
"Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her under-
stood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to
rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward
the Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl,
and she
With frequent smile and nod depart-
ing found,
Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl;
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,
and then
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her
face,
And told her all their converse in the
hall,
Proving her heart: but never light and
shade
Coursed one another more on open
ground
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red
and pale
Across the face of Enid hearing her;
While slowly falling as a scale that
falls,
When weight is added only grain by
grain,
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle
breast;

Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a
word,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of
it;
So moving without answer to her rest
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to
draw
The quiet night into her blood, but
lay
Contemplating her own unworthiness;
And when the pale and bloodless east
began
To quicken to the sun, arose, and
raised
Her mother too, and hand in hand
they moved
Down to the meadow where the jousts
were held,
And waited there for Yniol and
Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and
when Geraint
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
He felt, were she the prize of bodily
force,
Himself beyond the rest pushing could
move
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted
arms
Were on his princely person, but thro'
these
Princelike his bearing shone; and
errant knights
And ladies came, and by and by the
town
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the
lists.
And there they fixt the forks into the
ground,
And over these they placed the silver
wand,
And over that the golden sparrow-
hawk.
Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet
blown,
Spake to the lady with him and pro-
claim'd,
"Advance and take as fairest of the
fair,
For I these two years past have won
it for thee,
The prize of beauty." Loudly spake
the Prince,
"Forbear: there is a worthier," and
the knight
With some surprise and thrice as much
disdain
Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all
his face
Glow'd like the heart of a great fire
at Yule,
So burnt he was with passion, crying
out,
"Do battle for it then," no more; and
thrice

They clash'd together, and thrice they
brake their spears.
Then each, dishorsed and drawing,
lash'd at each
So often and with such blows, that all
the crowd
Wonder'd, and now and then from
distant walls
There came a clapping as of phantom
hands.
So twice they fought, and twice they
breathed, and still
The dew of their great labor, and the
blood
Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd
their force.
But either's force was match'd till
Yniol's cry,
"Remember that great insult done the
Queen,"
Increased Geraint's, who heaved his
blade aloft,
And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit
the bone,
And fell'd him, and set foot upon his
breast.
And said, "Thy name?" To whom
the fallen man
Made answer, groaning, "Edyrn, son
of Nudd!
Ashamed am I that I should tell it
thee.
My pride is broken: men have seen
my fall."
"Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd," replied
Geraint,
"These two things shalt thou do, or
else thou diest.
First, thou thyself, with damsel and
with dwarf,
Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and com-
ing there,
Crave pardon for that insult done the
Queen,
And shalt abide her judgment on it;
next,
Thou shalt give back their earldom to
thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or
thou shalt die."
And Edyrn answer'd, "These things
will I do,
For I have never yet been over-
thrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my
pride
Is broken down, for Enid sees my
fall!"
And rising up, he rode to Arthur's
court,
And there the Queen forgave him
easily.
And being young, he changed and
came to loathe
His crime of traitor, slowly drew him-
self

Bright from his old dark life, and fell
at last
In the great battle fighting for the
King.

But when the third day from the
hunting-morn
Made a low splendor in the world, and
wings
Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she
lay
With her fair head in the dim-yellow
light,
Among the dancing shadows of the
birds,
Woke and bethought her of her
promise given
No later than last eve to Prince
Geraint —
So bent he seem'd on going the third
day,
He would not leave her, till her prom-
ise given —
To ride with him this morning to the
court,
And there be made known to the
stately Queen,
And there be wedded with all cere-
mony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her
dress,
And thought it never yet had look'd
so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November is
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd
The dress that now she look'd on to
the dress
She look'd on ere the coming of
Geraint.
And still she look'd, and still the
terror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful
thing, a court,
All staring at her in her faded silk :
And softly to her own sweet heart she
said :

"This noble prince who won our
earldom back,
So splendid in his acts and his attire,
Sweet heaven, how much I shall dis-
credit him !
Would he could tarry with us here
awhile,
But being so beholden to the Prince,
It were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seem'd on going this third
day,
To seek a second favor at his hands.
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and finger
lame,
Far liefer than so much discredit him."

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branch'd and flower'd with gold,
a costly gift

Of her good mother, given her on the
night
Before her birth day, three sad years
ago,
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd
their house,
And scatter'd all they had to all the
winds :
For while the mother show'd it, and
the two
Were turning and admiring it, the
work
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry
That Edyrn's men were on them, and
they fled
With little save the jewels they had
on,
Which being sold and sold had bought
them bread :
And Edyrn's men had caught them in
their flight,
And placed them in this ruin; and
she wish'd
The Prince had found her in her
ancient home;
Then let her fancy flit across the past,
And roam the goodly places that she
knew;
And last bethought her how she used
to watch,
Near that old home, a pool of golden
carp;
And one was patch'd and blurr'd and
lustreless
Among his burnish'd brethren of the
pool;
And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own faded self
And the gay court, and fell asleep
again;
And dreamt herself was such a faded
form
Among her burnish'd sisters of the
pool;
But this was in the garden of a king;
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she
knew
That all was bright; that all about
were birds
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work;
That all the turf was rich in plots that
look'd
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;
And lords and ladies of the high court
went
In silver tissue talking things of state;
And children of the King in cloth of
gold
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down
the walks;
And while she thought "They will
not see me," came
A stately queen whose name was
Guinevere,
And all the children in their cloth of
gold

Ran to her, crying, "If we have fish
at all
Let them be gold; and charge the
gardeners now
To pick the faded creature from the
pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die."
And therewithal one came and seized
on her,
And Enid started waking, with her
heart
All overshadow'd by the foolish
dream,
And lo! it was her mother grasping
her
To get her well awake; and in her
hand
A suit of bright apparel, which she
laid
Flat on the couch, and spoke exult-
ingly:

"See here, my child, how fresh the
colors look,
How fast they hold like colors of a
shell
That keeps the wear and polish of the
wave.
Why not? It never yet was worn, I
trow:
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye
know it."

And Enid look'd but all confused
at first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish
dream:
Then suddenly she knew it and re-
joiced,
And answer'd, "Yea, I know it; your
good gift,
So sadly lost on that unhappy night;
Your own good gift!" "Yea, surely,"
said the dame,
"And gladly given again this happy
morn.
For when the jousts were ended yes-
terday,
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-
where
He found the sack and plunder of our
house
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the
town;
And gave command that all which
once was ours
Should now be ours again: and yes-
ter-eve,
While ye were talking sweetly with
your Prince,
Came one with this and laid it in my
hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favor of
us,
Because we have our earldom back
again.

And yester-eve I would not tell you
of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at
morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?
For I myself unwillingly have worn
My faded suit, as you, my child, have
yours,
And howsoever patient, Yniol his.
Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly
house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous
fare,
And page, and maid, and squire, and
seneschal,
And pastime both of hawk and hound,
and all
That appertains to noble maintenance.
Yea, and he brought me to a goodly
house;
But since our fortune swerved from
sun to shade,
And all thro' that young traitor, cruel
need
Constrain'd us, but a better time has
come;
So clothe yourself in this, that better
fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's
bride:
For tho' ye won the prize of fairest
fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest
fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than
old.
And should some great court-lady
say, the Prince
Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the
hedge,
And like a madman brought her
to the court,
Then were ye shamed, and, worse,
might shame the Prince
To whom we are beholden; but I
know,
When my dear child is set forth at
her best,
That neither court nor country, tho'
they sought
Thro' all the provinces like those of
old
That lighted on Queen Esther, has
her match."

Here ceased the kindly mother out
of breath;
And Enid listen'd brightening as she
lay;
Then, as the white and glittering star
of morn
Parts from a bank of snow, and by
and by
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden
rose,

And left her maiden couch, and robed
 herself,
 Help'd by the mother's careful hand
 and eye,
 Without a mirror, in the gorgeous
 gown;
 Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,
 and said,
 She never yet had seen her half so
 fair;
 And call'd her like that maiden in the
 tale,
 Whom Gwydion made by glamour out
 of flowers,
 And sweeter than the bride of Cas-
 sive-laun,
 Flur, for whose love the Roman
 Cæsar first
 Invaded Britain, "But we beat him
 back,
 As this great Prince invaded us, and
 we,
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him
 with joy.
 And I can scarcely ride with you to
 court,
 For old am I, and rough the ways and
 wild;
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall
 dream
 I see my princess as I see her now,
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among
 the gay."

But while the women thus rejoiced,
 Geraint
 Woke where he slept in the high hall,
 and call'd
 For Enid, and when Yniol made report
 Of that good mother making Enid
 gay
 In such apparel as might well beseem
 His princess, or indeed the stately
 Queen,
 He answer'd: "Earl, entreat her by
 my love,
 Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
 That she ride with me in her faded
 silk."
 Yniol with that hard message went;
 it fell
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty
 corn:
 For Enid, all abash'd she knew not
 why,
 Dared not to glance at her good
 mother's face,
 But silently, in all obedience,
 Her mother silent too, nor helping
 her,
 Laid from her limbs the costly-broid-
 er'd gift,
 And robed them in her ancient suit
 again,
 And so descended. Never man re-
 joiced

More than Geraint to greet her thus
 attired;
 And glancing all at once as keenly at
 her
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-
 lid fall,
 But rested with her sweet face satis-
 fied;
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's
 brow,
 Her by both hands he caught, and
 sweetly said,

"O my new mother, be not wroth
 or grieved
 At thy new son, for my petition to
 her.
 When late I left Caerleon, our great
 Queen,
 In words whose echo lasts, they were
 so sweet,
 Made promise, that whatever bride I
 brought,
 Herself would clothe her like the sun
 in Heaven.
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd
 hall,
 Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our fair
 Queen,
 No hand but hers, should make your
 Enid burst
 Sunlike from cloud — and likewise
 thought perhaps,
 That service done so graciously would
 bind
 The two together; fain I would the
 two
 Should love each other: how can
 Enid find
 A nobler friend? Another thought
 was mine;
 I came among you here so suddenly,
 That tho' her gentle presence at the
 lists
 Might well have served for proof that
 I was loved,
 I doubted whether daughter's tender-
 ness,
 Or easy nature, might not let itself
 Be moulded by your wishes for her
 weal;
 Or whether some false sense in her
 own self
 Of my contrasting brightness, over-
 bore
 Her fancy dwelling in this dusky
 hall;
 And such a sense might make her
 long for court
 And all its perilous glories: and I
 thought,
 That could I someway prove such
 force in her

Link'd with such love for me, that at
 a word
 (No reason given her) she could cast
 aside
 A splendor dear to women, new to
 her,
 And therefore dearer; or if not so
 new,
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the
 power

Of intermitted usage; then I felt
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and
 flows,
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I
 do rest,
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,
 That never shadow of mistrust can
 cross
 Between us. Grant me pardon for
 my thoughts:



"Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd the giant tower."

And for my strange petition I will
 make
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,
 When your fair child shall wear your
 costly gift
 Beside your own warm hearth, with,
 on her knees,
 Who knows? another gift of the high
 God,
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to
 lisp you thanks."

He spoke: the mother smiled, but
 half in tears,

Then brought a mantle down and
 wrapt her in it,
 And claspt and kiss'd her, and they
 rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere
 had climb'd
 The giant tower, from whose high
 crest, they say,
 Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
 And white sails flying on the yellow
 sea;
 But not to goodly hill or yellow
 sea

Look'd the fair Queen, but up the
vale of Usk,
By the flat meadow, till she saw them
come;
And then descending met them at the
gates,
Embraced her with all welcome as a
friend,
And did her honor as the Prince's
bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like
the sun;
And all that week was old Caerleon
gay,
For by the hands of Dubric, the high
saint,
They twain were wedded with all
ceremony.

And this was on the last year's
Whitsuntide.
But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on
her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved
her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the
dress,
And all his journey toward her, as
himself
Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

And now this morning when he said
to her,
"Put on your worst and meanest
dress," she found
And took it, and array'd herself
therein.

II.

O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for our-
selves,
By taking true for false, or false for
true;
Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this
world
Groping, how many, until we pass and
reach
That other, where we see as we are
seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issu-
ing forth
That morning, when they both had
got to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passion-
ately,
And felt that tempest brooding round
his heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break
perforce
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said:

"Not at my side. I charge thee ride
before,
Ever a good way on before; and
this
I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to
me,
No, not a word!" and Enid was
aghast;
And forth they rode, but scarce three
paces on,
When crying out, "Effeminate as I
am,
I will not fight my way with gilded
arms,
All shall be iron;" he loosed a mighty
purse,
Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward
the squire.
So the last sight that Enid had of
home
Was all the marble threshold flashing,
strown
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and
the squire
Chafing his shoulder: then he cried
again,
"To the wilds!" and Enid leading
down the tracks
Thro' which he bade her lead him on,
they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted
holds,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places
of the hern,
And wildernesses, perilous paths, they
rode:
Round was their pace at first, but
slacken'd soon:
A stranger meeting them had surely
thought
They rode so slowly and they look'd
so pale,
That each had suffer'd some exceed-
ing wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself,
"O I that wasted time to tend upon
her,
To compass her with sweet obser-
vances,
To dress her beautifully and keep her
true"—
And there he broke the sentence in
his heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue
May break it, when his passion mas-
ters him.
And she was ever praying the sweet
heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any
wound.
And ever in her mind she cast
about
For that unnoticed failing in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and
so cold;

Till the great plover's human whistle
 amazed
 Her heart, and glancing round the
 waste she fear'd
 In every wavering brake an ambus-
 cade.
 Then thought again, "If there be such
 in me,
 I might amend it by the grace of
 Heaven,
 If he would only speak and tell me of
 it."*

But when the fourth part of the day
 was gone,
 Then Enid was aware of three tall
 knights
 On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a
 rock
 In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs
 all;
 And heard one crying to his fellow,
 "Look,
 Here comes a laggard hanging down
 his head,
 Who seems no bolder than a beaten
 hound;
 Come, we will slay him and will have
 his horse
 And armor, and his damsel shall be
 ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart,
 and said:
 "I will go back a little to my lord,
 And I will tell him all their caitiff
 talk;
 For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
 Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
 Than that my lord should suffer loss
 or shame."

Then she went back some paces of
 return,
 Met his full frown timidly firm, and
 said;
 "My lord, I saw three bandits by the
 rock
 Waiting to fall on you, and heard
 them boast
 That they would slay you, and possess
 your horse
 And armor, and your damsel should
 be theirs."

He made a wrathful answer: "Did
 I wish
 Your warning or your silence? one
 command
 I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
 And thus ye keep it! Well then, look
 —for now,
 Whether ye wish me victory or defeat,
 Long for my life, or hunger for my
 death,
 Yourself shall see my vigor is not
 lost."

Then Enid waited pale and sorrow-
 ful,
 And down upon him bare the bandit
 three.
 And at the midmost charging, Prince
 Geraint
 Drave the long spear a cubit thro' his
 breast
 And out beyond; and then against his
 brace
 Of comrades, each of whom had
 broken on him
 A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
 Swung from his brand a windy buffet
 out
 Once, twice, to right, to left, and
 stunn'd the twain
 Or slew them, and dismounting like a
 man
 That skins the wild beast after slaying
 him,
 Stript from the three dead wolves of
 woman born
 The three gay suits of armor which
 they wore,
 And let the bodies lie, but bound the
 suits
 Of armor on their horses, each on each,
 And tied the bridle-reins of all the
 three
 Together, and said to her, "Drive
 them on
 Before you;" and she drove them
 thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to
 work
 Against his anger in him, while he
 watch'd
 The being he loved best in all the
 world,
 With difficulty in mild obedience
 Driving them on: he fain had spoken
 to her,
 And loosed in words of sudden fire the
 wrath
 And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him
 all within;
 But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
 At once without remorse to strike her
 dead,
 Than to cry "Halt," and to her own
 bright face
 Accuse her of the least immodesty:
 And thus tongue-tied, it made him
 wroth the more
 That she *could* speak whom his own
 ear had heard
 Call herself false: and suffering thus
 he made
 Minutes an age: but in scarce longer
 time
 Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
 Before he turn to fall seaward again,
 Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, be-
 hold

In the first shallow shade of a deep
wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted
oaks,
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly
arm'd,
Whereof one seem'd far larger than
her lord,
And shook her pulses, crying, "Look,
a prize!
Three horses and three goodly suits
of arms,
And all in charge of whom? a girl:
set on."
"Nay," said the second, "yonder
comes a knight."
The third, "A craven; how he hangs
his head."
The giant answer'd merrily, "Yea, but
one?
Wait here, and when he passes fall
upon him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and
said,
"I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villany.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his
good;
How should I dare obey him to his
harm?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill
me for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said
to him
With timid firmness, "Have I leave
to speak?"
He said, "Ye take it, speaking," and
she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder
in the wood,
And each of them is wholly arm'd,
and one
Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they
say
That they will fall upon you while ye
pass."

To which he flung a wrathful an-
swer back:
"And if there were an hundred in the
wood,
And every man were larger-limb'd
than I,
And all at once should sally out upon
me,
I swear it would not ruffle me so much
As you that not obey me. Stand
aside,
And if I fall, cleave to the better
man."

And Enid stood aside to wait the
event,
Not dare to watch the combat, only
breathe
Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a
breath.
And he, she dreaded most, bare down
upon him.
Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd; but
Geraint's,
A little in the late encounter strain'd,
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corse-
let home,
And then brake short, and down his
enemy roll'd,
And there lay still; as he that tells
the tale
Saw once a great piece of a promon-
tory,
That had a sapling growing on it,
slide
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls
to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling
grew:
So lay the man transfixt. His craven
pair
Of comrades making slower at the
Prince,
When now they saw their bulwark
fallen, stood;
On whom the victor, to confound them
more,
Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry; for
as one,
That listens near a torrent mountain-
brook,
All thro' the crash of the near cataract
hears
The drumming thunder of the huger
fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to
hear
His voice in battle, and be kindled by
it,
And foemen scared, like that false
pair who turn'd
Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
Themselves had wrought on many an
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting,
pick'd the lance
That pleased him best, and drew from
those dead wolves
Their three gay suits of armor, each
from each,
And bound them on their horses, each
on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the
three
Together, and said to her, "Drive
them on
Before you," and she drove them thro'
the wood.

He follow'd nearer still: the pain
 she had
 To keep them in the wild ways of the
 wood,
 Two sets of three laden with jingling
 arms,
 Together, served a little to disedge
 The sharpness of that pain about her
 heart:
 And they themselves, like creatures
 gently born
 But into bad hands fall'n, and now so
 long
 By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light
 ears, and felt
 Her low firm voice and tender govern-
 ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood
 they past,
 And issuing under open heavens be-
 held
 A little town with towers, upon a
 rock,
 And close beneath, a meadow gemlike
 chased
 In the brown wild, and mowers mow-
 ing in it:
 And down a rocky pathway from the
 place
 There came a fair-hair'd youth, that
 in his hand
 Bare victual for the mowers: and
 Geraint
 Had ruth again on Enid looking pale:
 Then, moving downward to the
 meadow ground,
 He, when the fair-hair'd youth came
 by him, said,
 "Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so
 faint."
 "Yea, willingly," replied the youth;
 "and thou,
 My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is
 coarse,
 And only meet for mowers;" then set
 down
 His basket, and dismounting on the
 sward
 They let the horses graze, and ate
 themselves.
 And Enid took a little delicately,
 Less having stomach for it than desire
 To close with her lord's pleasure; but
 Geraint
 Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
 And when he found all empty, was
 amazed;
 And, "Boy," said he, "I have eaten
 all, but take
 A horse and arms for guerdon; choose
 the best."
 He, reddening in extremity of delight,
 "My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold."
 "Ye will be all the wealthier," cried
 the Prince.

"I take it as free gift, then," said the
 boy,
 "Not guerdon; for myself can easily,
 While your good damsel rests, return,
 and fetch
 Fresh victual for these mowers of our
 Earl;
 For these are his, and all the field is
 his,
 And I myself am his; and I will tell
 him
 How great a man thou art: he loves
 to know
 When men of mark are in his terri-
 tory:
 And he will have thee to his palace
 here,
 And serve thee costlier than with
 mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better
 fare:
 I never ate with angrier appetite
 Than when I left your mowers dinner-
 less.
 And into no Earl's palace will I go.
 I know, God knows, too much of
 palaces!
 And if he want me, let him come to
 me.
 But hire us some fair chamber for the
 night,
 And stalling for the horses, and re-
 turn
 With victual for these men, and let
 us know."

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad
 youth, and went,
 Held his head high, and thought him-
 self a knight,
 And up the rocky pathway disap-
 pear'd,
 Leading the horse, and they were left
 alone.

But when the Prince had brought
 his errant eyes
 Home from the rock, sideways he let
 them glance
 At Enid, where she droopt: his own
 false doom,
 That shadow of mistrust should never
 cross
 Betwixt them, came upon him, and he
 sigh'd;
 Then with another humorous ruth re-
 mark'd
 The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,
 And watch'd the sun blaze on the
 turning scythe,
 And after nodded sleepily in the
 heat.
 But she, remembering her old ruin'd
 hall,
 And all the windy clamor of the daws

About her hollow turret, pluck'd the
grass
There growing longest by the mead-
ow's edge,
And into many a listless annulet,
Now over, now beneath her marriage
ring,
Wove and unwove it, till the boy re-
turn'd
And told them of a chamber, and they
went;
Where, after saying to her, "If ye
will,
Call for the woman of the house," to
which
She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord;"
the two remain'd
Apart by all the chamber's width, and
mute
As creatures voiceless thro' the fault
of birth,
Or two wild men supporters of a
shield,
Painted, who stare at open space, nor
glance
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along
the street,
And heel against the pavement echo-
ing, burst
Their drowse; and either started while
the door,
Push'd from without, drave backward
to the wall,
And midmost of a rout of roisterers,
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place,
Limours.
He moving up with pliant courtli-
ness,
Greeted Geraint full face, but
stealthily,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and
graspt hand,
Found Enid with the corner of his
eye,
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
Then cried Geraint for wine and
goodly cheer
To feed the sudden guest, and sump-
tuously
According to his fashion, bade the
host
Call in what men soever were his
friends,
And feast with these in honor of their
Earl;
"And care not for the cost; the cost
is mine."

And wine and food were brought,
and Earl Limours
Drank till he jested with all ease, and
told

Free tales, and took the word and
play'd upon it,
And made it of two colors; for his
talk,
When wine and free companions
kindled him,
Was wont to glance and sparkle like
a gem
Of fifty facets; thus he moved the
Prince
To laughter and his comrades to ap-
plause.
Then, when the Prince was merry,
ask'd Limours,
"Your leave, my lord, to cross the
room, and speak
To your good damsel there who sits
apart,
And seems so lonely?" "My free
leave," he said;
"Get her to speak: she doth not speak
to me."
Then rose Limours, and looking at his
feet,
Like him who tries the bridge he fears
may fail,
Crost and came near, lifted adoring
eyes,
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisper-
ingly:

"Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
Enid, my early and my only love,
Enid, the loss of whom hath turn'd me
wild —
What chance is this? how is it I see
you here?
Ye are in my power at last, are in my
power.
Yet fear me not: I call mine own self
wild,
But keep a touch of sweet civility
Here in the heart of waste and wilder-
ness.
I thought, but that your father came
between,
In former days you saw me favorably.
And if it were so do not keep it back:
Make me a little happier: let me
know it:
Owe you me nothing for a life half-
lost?
Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all
you are.
And, Enid, you and he, I see with joy,
Ye sit apart, you do not speak to
him,
You come with no attendance, page or
maid,
To serve you — doth he love you as of
old?
For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
Tho' men may bicker with the things
they love,
They would not make them laughable
in all eyes,

Not while they loved them; and your
wretched dress,
A wretched insult on you, dumbly
speaks
Your story, that this man loves you
no more.
Your beauty is no beauty to him now:
A common chance—right well I know
it—pall'd—
For I know men: nor will ye win him
back,
For the man's love once gone never
returns.
But here is one who loves you as of old;
With more exceeding passion than of
old:
Good, speak the word: my followers
ring him round:
He sits unarm'd; I hold a finger up;
They understand: nay; I do not mean
blood:
Nor need ye look so scared at what I
say:
My malice is no deeper than a moat,
No stronger than a wall: there is the
keep;
He shall not cross us more; speak but
the word:
Or speak it not; but then by Him that
made me
The one true lover whom you ever
own'd,
I will make use of all the power I have.
O pardon me! the madness of that
hour,
When first I parted from thee, moves
me yet."

At this the tender sound of his own
voice
And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it
Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd
his eyes,
Moist as they were, wine-heated from
the feast;
And answer'd with such craft as
women use,
Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a
chance
That breaks upon them perilously,
and said:

"Earl, if you love me as in former
years,
And do not practise on me, come with
morn,
And snatch me from him as by
violence;
Leave me to-night: I am weary to the
death."

Low at leave-taking, with his bran-
dish'd plume
Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-
amorous Earl,

And the stout Prince bade him a loud
good-night.
He moving homeward babbled to his
men,
How Enid never loved a man but him,
Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her
lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince
Geraint,
Debating his command of silence
given,
And that she now perforce must vio-
late it,
Held commune with herself, and while
she held
He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart
To wake him, but hung o'er him,
wholly pleased
To find him yet unwounded after fight,
And hear him breathing low and
equally.
Anon she rose, and stepping lightly,
heap'd
The pieces of his armor in one place,
All to be there against a sudden need;
Then dozed awhile herself, but over-
toil'd
By that day's grief and travel, ever-
more
Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn,
and then
Went slipping down horrible prec-
ipices,
And strongly striking out her limbs
awoke;
Then thought she heard the wild Earl
at the door,
With all his rout of random followers,
Sound on a dreadful trumpet, sum-
moning her;
Which was the red cock shouting to
the light,
As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy
world,
And glimmer'd on his armor in the
room.
And once again she rose to look at it,
But touch'd it unawares: jangling,
the casque
Fell, and he started up and stared at
her.
Then breaking his command of silence
given,
She told him all that Earl Limours
had said,
Except the passage that he loved her
not;
Nor left untold the craft herself had
used;
But ended with apology so sweet,
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and
seem'd
So justified by that necessity,
That tho' he thought "was it for him
she wept

In Devon?" he but gave a wrathful
groan,
Saying, "Your sweet faces make good
fellows fools
And traitors. Call the host and bid
him bring
Charger and palfrey." So she glided
out
Among the heavy breathings of the
house,
And like a household Spirit at the
walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and
return'd:
Then tending her rough lord, tho' all
unask'd,
In silence, did him service as a squire;
Till issuing arm'd he found the host
and cried,
"Thy reckoning, friend?" and ere he
learnt it, "Take
Five horses and their armors"; and
the host
Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,
"My lord, I scarce have spent the
worth of one!"
"Ye will be all the wealthier," said
the Prince,
And then to Enid, "Forward! and
to-day
I charge you, Enid, more especially,
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,
Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
To charge you) that ye speak not but
obey."

And Enid answer'd, "Yea, my lord,
I know
Your wish, and would obey; but rid-
ing first,
I hear the violent threats you do not
hear,
I see the danger which you cannot see:
Then not to give you warning, that
seems hard;
Almost beyond me: yet I would
obey."

"Yea so," said he, "do it: be not
too wise;
Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
Not all mismated with a yawning
clown,
But one with arms to guard his head
and yours,
With eyes to find you out however
far,
And ears to hear you even in his
dreams."

With that he turn'd and look'd as
keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's
toil;
And that within her, which a wanton
fool,

Or hasty judger would have call'd her
guilt,
Made her cheek burn and either eye-
lid fall.
And Geraint look'd and was not satis-
fied.

Then forward by a way which,
beaten broad,
Led from the territory of false
Limours
To the waste earldom of another earl,
Doorm, whom his shaking vassals
call'd the Bull,
Went Enid with her sullen follower
on.
Once she look'd back, and when she
saw him ride
More near by many a rood than yes-
termorn,
It wellnigh made her cheerful; till
Geraint
Waving an angry hand as who should
say
"Yewatch me," sadden'd all her heart
again.
But while the sun yet beat a dewy
blade,
The sound of many a heavily-gallop-
ing hoof
Smote on her ear, and turning round
she saw
Dust, and the points of lances bicker
in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he
rode
As if he heard not, moving back she
held
Her finger up, and pointed to the
dust.
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
Because she kept the letter of his
word,
Was in a manner pleased, and turning,
stood.
And in the moment after, wild
Limours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thun-
der-cloud
Whose skirts are loosen'd by the
breaking storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he
rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry
shriek,
Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with
him, and bore
Down by the length of lance and arm
beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunn'd
or dead,
And overthrew the next that follow'd
him,
And blindly rush'd on all the rout
behind.

But at the flash and motion of the
man
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a
shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer
morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on
the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the
brink
But lift a shining hand against the
sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in
flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the
man,
Fled all the been companions of the
Earl,
And left him lying in the public way;
So vanish friendships only made in
wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled
Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that
fell
Start from their fallen lords, and
wildly fly,
Mixt with the flyers. "Horse and
man," he said,
"All of one mind and all right-honest
friends!
Not a hoof left: and I methinks till
now
Was honest — paid with horses and
with arms;
I cannot steal or plunder, nor nor beg:
And so what say ye, shall we strip
him there
Your lover? has your palfrey heart
enough
To bear his armor? shall we fast, or
dine?
No? — then do thou, being right hon-
est, pray
That we may meet the horsemen of
Earl Doorn,
I too would still be honest." Thus
he said:
And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
And answering not a word, she led the
way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful
loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it
not,
But coming back he learns it, and the
loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to
death;
So fared it with Geraint, who being
prick'd

In combat with the follower of
Limours,
Bled underneath his armor secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle
wife
What ail'd him, hardly knowing it
himself,
Till his eye darken'd and his helmet
wagg'd;
And at a sudden swerving of the
road,
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,
The Prince, without a word, from his
horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his
fall,
Suddenly came, and at his side all
pale
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of
his arms,
Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue
eye
Moisten, till she had lighted on his
wound,
And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blister-
ing sun,
And swathed the hurt that drain'd her
dear lord's life.
Then after all was done that hand
could do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the
way.

And many past, but none regarded
her,
For in that realm of lawless turbu-
lence,
A woman weeping for her murder'd
mate
Was cared as much for as a summer
shower:
One took him for a victim of Earl
Doorn,
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on
him:
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;
Half whistling and half singing a
coarse song,
He drove the dust against her veiless
eyes:
Another, flying from the wrath of
Doorn
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in
his fear;
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted
heel
And scour'd into the coppices and was
lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved
like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge
 Earl Doorm,
 Broad-faced with under-fringe of rus-
 set beard,
 Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of
 prey,
 Came riding with a hundred lances
 up ;
 But ere he came, like one that hails a
 ship,
 Cried out with a big voice, " What, is
 he dead ? "
 " No, no, not dead ! " she answer'd in
 all haste.
 " Would some of your kind people
 take him up,
 And bear him hence out of this cruel
 sun ?
 Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not
 dead."

Then said Earl Doorm: " Well, if
 he be not dead,
 Why wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a
 child.
 And be he dead, I count you for a
 fool ;
 Your wailing will not quicken him :
 dead or not,
 Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
 Yet, since the face *is* comely — some
 of you,
 Here, take him up, and bear him to
 our hall :
 An if he live, we will have him of our
 band ;
 And if he die, why earth has earth
 enough
 To hide him. See ye take the charger
 too,
 A noble one."

He spake, and past away,
 But left two brawny spearmen, who
 advanced,
 Each growling like a dog, when his
 good bone
 Seems to be pluck'd at by the village
 boys
 Who love to vex him eating, and he
 fears
 To lose his bone, and lays his foot
 upon it,
 Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians
 growl'd,
 Fearing to lose, and all for a dead
 man,
 Their chance of booty from the morn-
 ing's raid,
 Yet raised and laid him on a litter-
 bier,
 Such as they brought upon their forays
 out
 For those that might be wounded ; laid
 him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and
 took
 And bore him to the naked hall of
 Doorm,
 (His gentle charger following him
 unled)
 And cast him and the bier in which
 he lay
 Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
 And then departed, hot in haste to
 join
 Their luckier mates, but growling as
 before,
 And cursing their lost time, and the
 dead man,
 And their own Earl, and their own
 souls, and her.
 They might as well have blest her :
 she was deaf
 To blessing or to cursing save from
 one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her
 lord,
 There in the naked hall, propping his
 head,
 And chafing his pale hands, and call-
 ing to him.
 Till at the last he waken'd from his
 swoon,
 And found his own dear bride prop-
 ping his head,
 And chafing his faint hands, and
 calling to him ;
 And felt the warm tears falling on his
 face ;
 And said to his own heart, " She weeps
 for me " :
 And yet lay still, and feign'd himself
 as dead,
 That he might prove her to the utter-
 most,
 And say to his own heart, " She weeps
 for me."

But in the falling afternoon return'd
 The huge Earl Doorm with plunder
 to the hall.
 His lusty spearmen follow'd him with
 noise :
 Each hurling down a heap of things
 that rang
 Against the pavement, cast his lance
 aside,
 And doff'd his helm : and then there
 flutter'd in,
 Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated
 eyes,
 A tribe of women, dress'd in many
 hues,
 And mingled with the spearmen : and
 Earl Doorm
 Struck with a knife's haft hard
 against the board,
 And call'd for flesh and wine to feed
 his spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and
 quarter beeves,
 And all the hall was dim with steam
 of flesh:
 And none spake word, but all sat
 down at once,
 And ate with tumult in the naked
 hall,
 Feeding like horses when you hear
 them feed;
 Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
 To shun the wild ways of the lawless
 tribe.
 But when Earl Doorm had eaten all
 he would,
 He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and
 found
 A damsel drooping in a corner of it.
 Then he remember'd her, and how she
 wept;
 And out of her there came a power
 upon him;
 And rising on the sudden he said,
 "Eat!
 I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
 God's curse, it makes me mad to see
 you weep.
 Eat! Look yourself. Good luck had
 your good man,
 For were I dead who is it would
 weep for me?
 Sweet lady, never since I first drew
 breath
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
 And so there lived some color in your
 cheek,
 There is not one among my gentle-
 women
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a
 glove.
 But listen to me, and by me be
 ruled,
 And I will do the thing I have not
 done,
 For ye shall share my earldom with
 me, girl,
 And we will live like two birds in one
 nest,
 And I will fetch you forage from all
 fields,
 For I compel all creatures to my will."

He spoke: the brawny spearman
 let his cheek
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and
 turning stared;
 While some, whose souls the old ser-
 pent long had drawn
 Down, as the worm draws in the
 wither'd leaf
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at
 other's ear
 What shall not be recorded — women
 they,
 Women, or what had been those
 gracious things,

But now desired the humbling of their
 best,
 Yea, would have help'd him to it: and
 all at once
 They hated her, who took no thought
 of them,
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek
 head yet
 Drooping, "I pray you of your cour-
 tesy,
 He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard
 her speak,
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied
 With what himself had done so gra-
 ciously,
 Assumed that she had thank'd him,
 adding, "Yea,
 Eat and be glad, for I account you
 mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should
 I be glad
 Henceforth in all the world at any-
 thing,
 Until my lord arise and look upon
 me?"

Here the huge Earl cried out upon
 her talk,
 As all but empty heart and weariness
 And sickly nothing; suddenly seized
 on her,
 And bare her by main violence to the
 board,
 And thrust the dish before her, cry-
 ing, "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, vext, "I will
 not eat
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
 And eat with me." "Drink, then,"
 he answer'd. "Here!"
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held
 it to her,)
 "Lo! I, myself, when flush'd with
 fight, or hot,
 God's curse, with anger — often I
 myself,
 Before I well have drunken, scarce
 can eat:
 Drink therefore and the wine will
 change your will."

"Not so," she cried, "By Heaven, I
 will not drink
 Till my dear lord arise and bid me do
 it,
 And drink with me; and if he rise no
 more,
 I will not look at wine until I die."

At this he turn'd all red and paced
 his hall,
 Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper
 lip,

And coming up close to her, said at last:

"Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,

Take warning: yonder man is surely dead;

And I compel all creatures to my will.

Not eat nor drink? And wherefore wail for one,

Who put your beauty to this flout and scorn

By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,

Beholding how ye butt against my wish,

That I forbear you thus: cross me no more.

At least put off to please me this poor gown,

This silken rag, this beggar-woman's weed:

I love that beauty should go beautifully:

For see ye not my gentlewomen here, How gay, how suited to the house of one

Who loves that beauty should go beautifully?

Rise therefore; robe yourself in this: obey."

He spoke, and one among his gentlewomen

Display'd a splendid silk of foreign loom,

Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue

Play'd into green, and thicker down the front

With jewels than the sward with drops of dew,

When all night long a cloud clings to the hill,

And with the dawn ascending lets the day

Strike where it clung: so thickly shone the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved

Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,

With life-long injuries burning un-avenged,

And now their hour has come; and Enid said:

"In this poor gown my dear lord found me first,

And loved me serving in my father's hall:

In this poor gown I rode with him to court,

And there the Queen array'd me like the sun:

In this poor gown he bade me clothe myself,

When now we rode upon this fatal quest

Of honor, where no honor can be gain'd:

And this poor gown I will not cast aside

Until himself arise a living man, And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough:

Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be:

I never loved, can never love but him:

Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,

He being as he is, to let me be."

Then strode the brute Earl up and down his hall,

And took his russet beard between his teeth;

Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood

Crying, "I count it of no more avail, Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with you;

Take my salute," unknighly with flat hand,

However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness, And since she thought, "He had not

dared to do it, Except he surely knew my lord was

dead," Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter

cry, As of a wild thing taken in the trap,

Which sees the trapper coming thro' the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,

(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),

Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it

Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like a ball

The russet-bearded head roll'd on the floor.

So died Earl Doorm by him he counted dead.

And all the men and women in the hall

Rose when they saw the dead man rise, and fled

Yelling as from a spectre, and the two Were left alone together, and he said:

"Enid, I have used you worse than that dead man;

Done you more wrong: we both have undergone



*"He turn'd his face
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her arms
About him, and at once they rode away."*

That trouble which has left me thrice
your own:
Henceforward I will rather die than
doubt.
And here I lay this penance on my-
self,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you
yestermorn—
You thought me sleeping, but I heard
you say,
I heard you say, that you were no true
wife:
I swear I will not ask your meaning
in it:

I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than
doubt."

And Enid could not say one tender
word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the
heart:
She only pray'd him, "Fly, they will
return
And slay you; fly, your charger is
without,
My palfrey lost." "Then, Enid, shall
you ride

Behind me." "Yea," said Enid, "let us go."
 And moving out they found the stately horse,
 Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
 But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
 Neigh'd with all gladness as they came, and stoop'd
 With a low whinny toward the pair: and she
 Kiss'd the white star upon his noble front,
 Glad also; then 'Geraint upon the horse
 Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on his foot
 She set her own and climb'd; he turn'd his face
 And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her arms
 About him, and at once they rode away.

And never yet, since high in Paradise
 O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
 Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
 Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous hour
 Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart,
 And felt him hers again: she did not weep,
 But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
 Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
 Before the useful trouble of the rain:
 Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
 As not to see before them on the path,
 Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
 A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance
 In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
 Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
 She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,
 Shriek'd to the stranger "Slay not a dead man!"
 "The voice of Enid," said the knight; but she,
 Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd,
 Was moved so much the more, and shriek'd again,
 "O cousin, slay not him who gave you life."
 And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake:
 "My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love;

I took you for a bandit knight of Doorn;
 And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
 Who love you, Prince, with something of the love
 Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.
 For once, when I was up so high in pride
 That I was half-way down the slope to Hell,
 By overthrowing me you threw me higher.
 Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,
 And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
 Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
 I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorn
 (The King is close behind me) bidding him
 Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
 Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He hears the judgment of the King of kings,"
 Cried the wan Prince; "and lo, the powers of Doorn
 Are scatter'd," and he pointed to the field,
 Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,
 Were men and women staring and aghast,
 While some yet fled; and then he plainlier told
 How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.
 But when the knight besought him, "Follow me,
 Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear
 Speak what has chanced; ye surely have endured
 Strange chances here alone;" that other flush'd,
 And hung his head, and halted in reply,
 Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
 And after madness acted question ask'd:
 Till Edyrn crying, "If ye will not go
 To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you."
 "Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went.
 But Enid in their going had two fears,
 One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
 And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,

When Edyrn rein'd his charger at
her side,
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
From which old fires have broken,
men may fear
Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving,
said :

"Fair and dear cousin, you that
most had cause
To fear me, fear no longer, I am
changed.
Yourself were first the blameless
cause to make
My nature's prideful sparkle in the
blood
Break into furious flame; being re-
pulsed
By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and
wrought
Until I overturn'd him; then set up
(With one main purpose ever at my
heart)
My haughty jousts, and took a para-
mour;
Did her mock-honor as the fairest
fair,
And, toppling over all antagonism,
So wax'd in pride, that I believed
myself
Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh
mad:
And, but for my main purpose in
these jousts,
I should have slain your father, seized
yourself.
I lived in hope that sometime you
would come
To these my lists with him whom best
you loved;
And there, poor cousin, with your
meek blue eyes,
The truest eyes that ever answer'd
Heaven,
Behold me overturn and trample on
him.
Then, had you cried, or knelt, or
pray'd to me,
I should not less have kill'd him.
And you came,—
But once you came,—and with your
own true eyes
Beheld the man you loved (I speak as
one
Speaks of a service done him) over-
throw
My proud self, and my purpose three
years old,
And set his foot upon me, and give
me life.
There was I broken down; there was
I saved:
Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating
the life
He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.

And all the penance the Queen laid
upon me
Was but to rest awhile within her
court;
Where first as sullen as a beast new-
caged,
And waiting to be treated like a
wolf,
Because I knew my deeds were known,
I found,
Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,
Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a
grace
Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
To glance behind me at my former
life,
And find that it had been the wolf's
indeed:
And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high
saint,
Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
Subdued me somewhat to that gentle-
ness,
Which, when it weds with manhood,
makes a man.
And you were often there about the
Queen,
But saw me not, or mark'd not if you
saw;
Nor did I care or dare to speak with
you,
But kept myself aloof till I was
changed;
And fear not, cousin; I am changed
indeed."

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
Like simple noble natures, credulous
Of what they long for, good in friend
or foe,
There most in those who most have
done them ill.
And when they reach'd the camp the
King himself
Advanced to greet them, and behold-
ing her
Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a
word,
But went apart with Edyrn, whom he
held
In converse for a little, and return'd,
And, gravely smiling, lifted her from
horse,
And kiss'd her with all pureness,
brother-like,
And show'd an empty tent allotted
her,
And glancing for a minute, till he saw
her
Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and
said :

"Prince, when of late ye pray'd me
for my leave

To move to your own land, and there defend
 Your marches, I was prick'd with some reproof,
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate and be,
 By having look'd too much thro' alien eyes,
 And wrought too long with delegated hands,
 Not used mine own: but now behold me come
 To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,
 With Edyrn and with others: have ye look'd
 At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly changed?
 This work of his is great and wonderful.
 His very face with change of heart is changed,
 The world will not believe a man repents:
 And this wise world of ours is mainly right.
 Full seldom doth a man repent, or use
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch
 Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
 And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
 As I will weed this land before I go.
 I, therefore, made him of our Table Round,
 Not rashly, but have proved him everyway
 One of our noblest, our most valorous, Sanest
 and most obedient: and indeed This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
 After a life of violence, seems to me
 A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
 Than if some knight of mine, risking his life,
 My subject with my subjects under him,
 Should make an onslaught single on a realm
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one,
 And were himself nigh wounded to the death."

So spake the King; low bow'd the Prince, and felt
 His work was neither great nor wonderful,
 And past to Enid's tent; and thither came
 The King's own leech to look into his hurt;

And Enid tended on him there; and there
 Her constant motion round him, and the breath
 Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
 Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
 With deeper and with ever deeper love,
 As the south-west that blowing Bala lake
 Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt,
 The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes
 On each of all whom Uther left in charge
 Long since, to guard the justice of the King:
 He look'd and found them wanting; and as now
 Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills
 To keep him bright and clean as heretofore,
 He rooted out the slothful officer
 Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong,
 And in their chairs set up a stronger race
 With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men
 To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
 Clear'd the dark places and let in the law,
 And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past
 With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.
 There the great Queen once more embraced her friend,
 And clothed her in apparel like the day.
 And tho' Geraint could never take again
 That comfort from their converse which he took
 Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon,
 He rested well content that all was well.
 Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them to the shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own land.
 And there he kept the justice of the King

So vigorously yet mildly, that all
 hearts
 Applauded, and the spiteful whisper
 died :
 And being ever foremost in the chase,
 And victor at the tilt and tournament,
 They call'd him the great Prince and
 man of men.
 But Enid, whom the ladies loved to
 call
 Enid the Fair, a grateful people
 named
 Enid the Good; and in their halls
 arose
 The cry of children, Enids and
 Geraints
 Of times to be; nor did he doubt her
 more,
 But rested in her fealty, till he
 crown'd
 A happy life with a fair death, and
 fell
 Against the heathen of the Northern
 Sea
 In battle, fighting for the blameless
 King.

MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds
 were still,
 And in the wild woods of Broceliande,
 Before an oak, so hollow, huge and
 old
 It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,
 At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

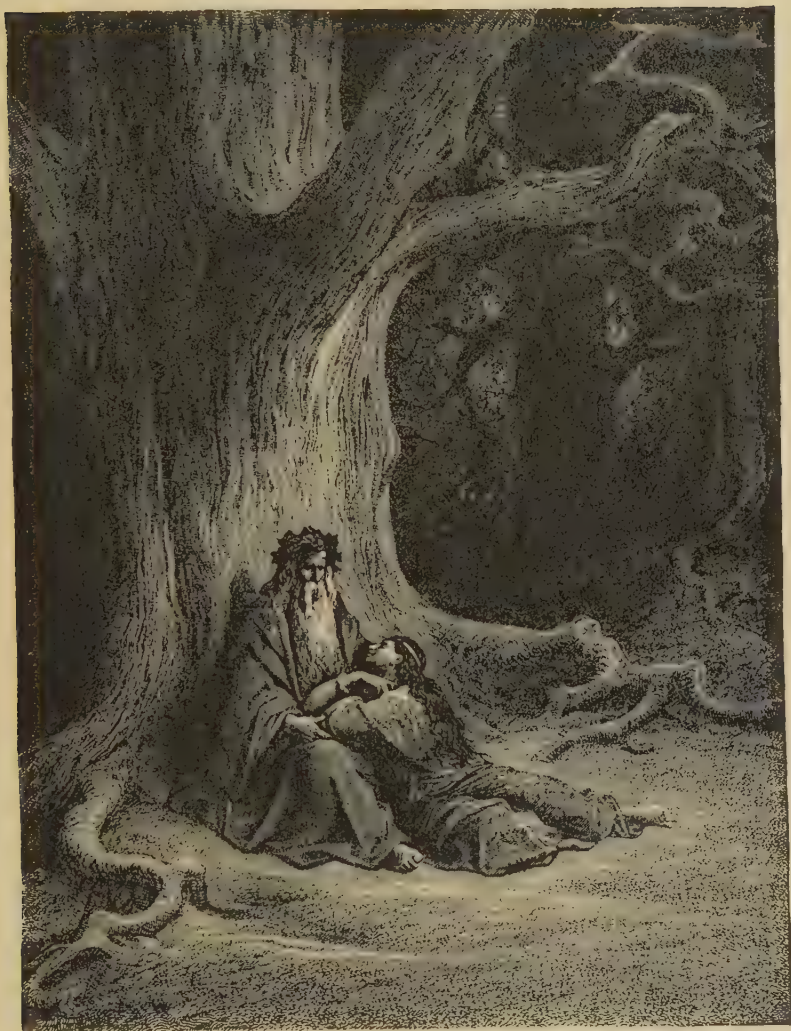
Whence came she? One that bare
 in bitter grudge
 The scorn of Arthur and his Table,
 Mark
 The Cornish King, had heard a wan-
 dering voice,
 A minstrel of Caerleon by strong storm
 Blown into shelter at Tintagil, say
 That out of naked knightlike purity
 Sir Lancelot worshipt no unmarried
 girl
 But the great Queen herself, fought
 in her name,
 Swore by her — vows like theirs, that
 high in heaven
 Love most, but neither marry, nor are
 given
 In marriage, angels of our Lord's re-
 port.

He ceased, and then — for Vivien
 sweetly said
 (She sat beside the banquet nearest
 Mark),
 "And is the fair example follow'd,
 Sir,
 In Arthur's household?" — answer'd
 innocently :

"Ay, by some few — ay, truly —
 youths that hold
 It more beseems the perfect virgin
 knight
 To worship woman as true wife be-
 yond
 All hopes of gaining, than as maiden
 girl.
 They place their pride in Lancelot and
 the Queen.
 So passionate for an utter purity
 Beyond the limit of their bond, are
 these,
 For Arthur bound them not to single-
 ness.
 Brave hearts and clean! and yet —
 God guide them — young."

Then Mark was half in heart to
 hurl his cup
 Straight at the speaker, but forbore:
 he rose
 To leave the hall, and, Vivien follow-
 ing him,
 Turn'd to her: "Here are snakes
 within the grass;
 And you methinks, O Vivien, save ye
 fear
 The monkish manhood, and the mask
 of pure
 Worn by this court, can stir them till
 they sting."

And Vivien answer'd, smiling scorn-
 fully,
 "Why fear? because that foster'd at
 thy court
 I savor of thy — virtues? fear them?
 no.
 As Love, if Love be perfect, casts out
 fear,
 So Hate, if Hate be perfect, casts out
 fear.
 My father died in battle against the
 King,
 My mother on his corpse in open field;
 She bore me there, for born from
 death was I
 Among the dead and sown upon the
 wind —
 And then on thee! and shown the
 truth betimes,
 That old true filth, and bottom of the
 well,
 Where Truth is hidden. Gracious
 lessons thine
 And maxims of the mud! 'This
 Arthur pure!
 Great Nature thro' the flesh herself
 hath made
 Gives him the lie! There is no being
 pure,
 My cherub; saith not Holy Writ the
 same?' —
 If I were Arthur, I would have thy
 blood.



"At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay."

Thy blessing, stainless King! I bring
 thee back,
 When I have ferreted out their bur-
 rowings,
 The hearts of all this Order in mine
 hand—
 Ay—so that fate and craft and folly
 close,
 Perchance, one curl of Arthur's
 golden beard.
 To me this narrow grizzled fork of
 thine

Is cleaner-fashion'd — Well, I loved
 thee first,
 That warps the wit."

Loud laugh'd the graceless Mark.
 But Vivien into Camelot stealing,
 lodged
 Low in the city, and on a festal day
 When Guinevere was crossing the
 great hall
 Cast herself down, knelt to the Queen,
 and wail'd.

"Why kneel ye there? What evil
have ye wrought?
Rise!" and the damsel bidden rise
arose
And stood with folded hands and
downward eyes
Of glancing corner, and all meekly
said,
"None wrought, but suffer'd much,
an orphan maid!
My father died in battle for thy King,
My mother on his corpse—in open
field,
The sad sea-sounding wastes of Lyon-
esse —
Poor wretch — no friend! — and now
by Mark the King
For that small charm of feature mine,
pursued —
If any such be mine—I fly to thee.
Save, save me thou — Woman of
women — thine
The wreath of beauty, thine the crown
of power,
Be thine the balm of pity, O Heaven's
own white
Earth-angel, stainless bride of stain-
less King —
Help, for he follows! take me to thy-
self!
O yield me shelter for mine innocency
Among thy maidens!"

Here her slow sweet eyes
Fear-tremulous, but humbly hopeful,
rose
Fixt on her hearer's, while the Queen
who stood
All glittering like May sunshine on
May leaves
In green and gold, and plumed with
green replied,
"Peace, child! of overpraise and over-
blame
We choose the last. Our noble
Arthur, him
Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear
and know.
Nay — we believe all evil of thy
Mark —
Well, we shall test thee farther; but
this hour
We ride a-hawking with Sir Lancelot.
He hath given us a fair falcon which
he train'd;
We go to prove it. Bide ye here the
while."

She past; and Vivien murmur'd
after "Go!
I bide the while." Then thro' the
portal-arch
Peering askance, and muttering
broken-wise,
As one that labors with an evil dream,
Beheld the Queen and Lancelot get to
horse.

"Is that the Lancelot? goodly —
ay, but gaunt:
Courteous — amends for gauntness —
takes her hand —
That glance of theirs, but for the
street, had been
A clinging kiss — how hand lingers
in hand!
Let go at last! — they ride away —
to hawk
For waterfowl. Royaller game is
mine.
For such a supersensual sensual bond
As that gray cricket chirpt of at our
hearth —
Touch flax with flame — a glance will
serve — the liars!
Ah little rat that borest in the dyke
Thy hole by night to let the boundless
deep
Down upon far-off cities while they
dance —
Or dream — of thee they dream'd not
— nor of me
These — ay, but each of either: ride,
and dream
The mortal dream that never yet was
mine —
Ride, ride and dream until ye wake —
to me!
Then, narrow court and lubber King,
farewell!
For Lancelot will be gracious to the
rat,
And our wise Queen, if knowing that
I know,
Will hate, loathe, fear — but honor
me the more."

Yet while they rode together down
the plain,
Their talk was all of training, terms
of art,
Diet and seeling, jesses, leash and lure.
"She is too noble" he said "to check
at pies,
Nor will she rake: there is no base-
ness in her."
Here when the Queen demanded as by
chance
"Know ye the stranger woman?"
"Let her be,"
Said Lancelot and unhooded casting
off
The goodly falcon free; she tower'd;
her bells,
Tone under tone, shrill'd; and they
lifted up
Their eager faces, wondering at the
strength,
Boldness and royal knighthood of the
bird
Who pounced her quarry and slew it.
Many a time
As once — of old — among the flowers
— they rode.

But Vivien half-forgotten of the
Queen
Among her damsels broidering sat,
heard, watch'd
And whisper'd: thro' the peaceful
court she crept
And whisper'd: then as Arthur in the
highest
Leaven'd the world, so Vivien in the
lowest,
Arriving at a time of golden rest,
And sowing one ill hint from ear to
ear,
While all the heathen lay at Arthur's
feet,
And no quest came, but all was joust
and play,
Leaven'd his hall. They heard and
let her be.

Thereafter as an enemy that has left
Death in the living waters, and with-
drawn,
The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's
court.

She hated all the knights, and heard
in thought
Their lavish comment when her name
was named.
For once, when Arthur walking all
alone,
Vext at a rumor issued from herself
Of some corruption crept among his
knights,
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted
fair,
Would fain have wrought upon his
cloudy mood
With reverent eyes mock-loyal,
shaken voice,
And flutter'd adoration, and at last
With dark sweet hints of some who
prized him more
Than who should prize him most; at
which the King
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone
by:
But one had watch'd, and had not held
his peace:
It made the laughter of an afternoon
That Vivien should attempt the
blameless King.
And after that, she set herself to gain
Him, the most famous man of all
those times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all
their arts,
Had built the King his havens, ships,
and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry
heavens;
The people call'd him Wizard; whom
at first
She play'd about with slight and
sprightly talk,

And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd
points
Of slander, glancing here and grazing
there;
And yielding to his kindlier moods,
the Seer
Would watch her at her petulance,
and play,
Ev'n when they seem'd unloveable,
and laugh
As those that watch a kitten; thus he
grew
Tolerant of what he half disdain'd,
and she,
Perceiving that she was but half dis-
dain'd,
Began to break her sports with graver
fits,
Turn red or pale, would often when
they met
Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
With such a fixt devotion, that the old
man,
Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at
times
Would flatter his own wish in age for
love,
And half believe her true: for thus at
times
He waver'd; but that other clung to
him,
Fixt in her will, and so the seasons
went.

Then fell on Merlin a great melan-
choly;
He walk'd with dreams and darkness,
and he found
A doom that ever poised itself to fall,
An ever-moaning battle in the mist,
World-war of dying flesh against the
life,
Death in all life and lying in all love,
The meanest having power upon the
highest,
And the high purpose broken by the
worm.

So leaving Arthur's court he gain'd
the beach;
There found a little boat, and stepped
into it;
And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd
her not.
She took the helm and he the sail;
the boat
Drave with a sudden wind across the
deeps,
And touching Breton sands, they dis-
embark'd.
And then she follow'd Merlin all the
way,
Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.
For Merlin once had told her of a
charm,
The which if any wrought on anyone

With woven paces and with waving
arms,
The man so wrought on ever seem'd
to lie
Closed in the four walls of a hollow
tower,
From which was no escape for ever-
more;
And none could find that man for
evermore,
Nor could he see but him who wrought
the charm
Coming and going, and he lay as dead
And lost to life and use and name
and fame.
And Vivien ever sought to work the
charm
Upon the great Enchanter of the
Time,
As fancying that her glory would be
great
According to his greatness whom she
quench'd.

There lay she all her length and
kiss'd his feet,
As if in deepest reverence and in love.
A twist of gold was round her hair; a
robe
Of samite without price, that more
express
Than hid her, clung about her lissome
limbs,
In color like the satin-shining palm
On shallows in the windy gleams of
March:
And while she kiss'd them, crying,
"Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro'
the world,
And I will pay you worship; tread
me down
And I will kiss you for it," he was
mute:
So dark a forethought roll'd about his
brain,
As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
The blind wave feeling round his long
sea-hall
In silence: wherefore, when she lifted
up
A face of sad appeal, and spake and
said,
"O Merlin, do ye love me?" and
again,
"O Merlin, do ye love me?" and once
more,
"Great Master, do ye love me?" he
was mute.
And lissome Vivien, holding by his
heel,
Writhed toward him, slid up his
knee and sat,
Behind his ankle twined her hollow
feet

Together, curved an arm about his
neck,
Clung like a snake; and letting her
left hand
Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a
leaf,
Made with her right a comb of pearl
to part
The lists of such a beard as youth gone
out
Had left in ashes: then he spoke and
said,
Not looking at her, "Who are wise in
love
Love most, say least," and Vivien
answer'd quick,
"I saw the little elf-god eyeless once
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:
But neither eyes nor tongue — O
stupid child!
Yet you are wise who say it; let me
think
Silence is wisdom: I am silent then,
And ask no kiss;" then adding all at
once,
"And lo, I clothe myself with wis-
dom," drew
The vast and shaggy mantle of his
beard
Across her neck and bosom to her
knee,
And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's
web,
Who meant to eat her up in that wild
wood
Without one word. So Vivien call'd
herself,
But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
Veil'd in gray vapor; till he sadly
smiled:
"To what request for what strange
boon," he said,
"Are these your pretty tricks and
fooleries,
O Vivien, the preamble? yet my
thanks,
For these have broken up my melan-
choly."

And Vivien answer'd smiling sau-
cily,
"What, O my Master, have ye found
your voice?
I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks
at last!
But yesterday you never open'd lip,
Except indeed to drink: no cup had
we:
In mine own lady palms I cull'd the
spring
That gather'd trickling dropwise from
the cleft,
And made a pretty cup of both my
hands

And offer'd you it kneeling: then you drank
 And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word;
 O no more thanks than might a goat have given
 With no more sign of reverence than a beard.
 And when we halted at that other well,
 And I was faint to swooning, and you lay
 Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those
 Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know
 That Vivien bathed your feet before her own?
 And yet no thanks: and all thro' this wild wood
 And all this morning when I fondled you:
 Boon, ay, there was a boon, one not so strange—
 How had I wrong'd you? surely ye are wise,
 But such a silence is more wise than kind."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and said:
 "O did ye never lie upon the shore,
 And watch the curl'd white of the coming wave
 Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks?
 Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,
 Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,
 Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.
 And then I rose and fled from Arthur's court
 To break the mood. You follow'd me unask'd;
 And when I look'd, and saw you following still,
 My mind involved yourself the nearest thing
 In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you truth?
 You seem'd that wave about to break upon me
 And sweep me from my hold upon the world,
 My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child.
 Your pretty sports have brighten'd all again.
 And ask your boon, for boon I owe you thrice,
 Once for wrong done you by confusion,
 next
 For thanks it seems till now neglected,
 last

For these your dainty gambols: wherefore ask;
 And take this boon so strange and not so strange."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully:
 "O not so strange as my long asking it,
 Not yet so strange as you yourself are strange,
 Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours.
 I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine;
 And see, yourself have own'd ye did me wrong.
 The people call you prophet: let it be:
 But not of those that can expound themselves.
 Take Vivien for expounder; she will call
 That three-days-long presageful gloom of yours
 No presage, but the same mistrustful mood
 That makes you seem less noble than yourself,
 Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,
 Now ask'd again: for see you not, dear love,
 That such a mood as that, which lately gloom'd
 Your fancy when ye saw me following you,
 Must make me fear still more you are not mine,
 Must make me yearn still more to prove you mine,
 And make me wish still more to learn this charm
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,
 As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.
 The charm so taught will charm us both to rest.
 For, grant me some slight power upon your fate,
 I, feeling that you felt me worthy trust,
 Should rest and let you rest, knowing you mine.
 And therefore be as great as ye are named,
 Not muffled round with selfish reticence.
 How hard you look and how denyingly!
 O, if you think this wickedness in me,
 That I should prove it on you unawares,
 That makes me passing wrathful; then our bond

Had best be loosed for ever: but
 think or not,
 By Heaven that hears I tell you the
 clean truth,
 As clean as blood of babes, as white
 as milk;
 O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
 If these unwitty wandering wits of
 mine,
 Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a
 dream,
 Have tript on such conjectural treach-
 ery —
 May this hard earth cleave to the
 Nadir hell
 Down, down, and close again, and nip
 me flat,
 If I be such a traitress. Yield my
 boon,
 Till which I scarce can yield you all
 I am;
 And grant my re-reiterated wish,
 The great proof of your love: because
 I think,
 However wise, ye hardly know me
 yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from
 hers and said,
 "I never was less wise, however wise,
 Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of
 trust,
 Than when I told you first of such a
 charm.
 Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
 Too much I trusted when I told you
 that,
 And stirr'd this vice in you which
 ruin'd man
 Thro' woman the first hour; for
 howsoe'er
 In children a great curiousness be
 well,
 Who have to learn themselves and all
 the world,
 In you, that are no child, for still I
 find
 Your face is practised when I spell
 the lines,
 I call it, — well, I will not call it vice:
 But since you name yourself the
 summer fly,
 I well could wish a cobweb for the
 gnat,
 That settles, beaten back, and beaten
 back
 Settles, till one could yield for wear-
 iness:
 But since I will not yield to give you
 power
 Upon my life and use and name and
 fame,
 Why will ye never ask some other
 boon?
 Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too
 much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-
 hearted maid
 That ever bided tryst at village stile,
 Made answer, either eyelid wet with
 tears:
 "Nay, Master, be not wrathful with
 your maid;
 Caress her: let her feel herself for-
 given
 Who feels no heart to ask another
 boon.
 I think ye hardly know the tender
 rhyme
 Of 'trust me not at all or all in all.'
 I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it
 once,
 And it shall answer for me. Listen
 to it.

'In Love, if Love be Love, if Love
 be ours,
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal
 powers:
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in
 all.

It is the little rift within the lute,
 That by and by will make the music
 mute,
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

'The little rift within the lover's
 lute
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
 That rotting inward slowly moulders
 all.

'It is not worth the keeping: let it
 go:
 But shall it? answer, darling, answer,
 no.
 And trust me not at all or all in all.'

O Master, do ye love my tender
 rhyme?"

And Merlin look'd and half believed
 her true,
 So tender was her voice, so fair her
 face,
 So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind
 her tears
 Like sunlight on the plain behind a
 shower:
 And yet he answer'd half indignantly:

"Far other was the song that once
 I heard
 By this huge oak, sung nearly where
 we sit:
 For here we met, some ten or twelve
 of us,
 To chase a creature that was current
 then
 In these wild woods, the hart with
 golden horns.

It was the time when first the question rose
 About the founding of a Table Round,
 That was to be, for love of God and men
 And noble deeds, the flower of all the world.
 And each incited each to noble deeds.
 And while we waited, one, the youngest of us,
 We could not keep him silent, out he flash'd,
 And into such a song, such fire for fame,
 Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
 To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
 That when he stopt we long'd to hurl together,
 And should have done it; but the beauteous beast
 Scared by the noise upstarted at our feet,
 And like a silver shadow slipt away
 Thro' the dim land; and all day long we rode
 Thro' the dim land against a rushing wind,
 That glorious roundel echoing in our ears,
 And chased the flashes of his golden horns
 Until they vanish'd by the fairy well
 That laughs at iron — as our warriors did —
 Where children cast their pins and nails, and cry,
 'Laugh, little well!' but touch it with a sword,
 It buzzes fiercely round the point; and there
 We lost him: such a noble song was that.
 But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet rhyme,
 I felt as tho' you knew this cursed charm,
 Were proving it on me, and that I lay
 And felt them slowly ebbing, name and fame."

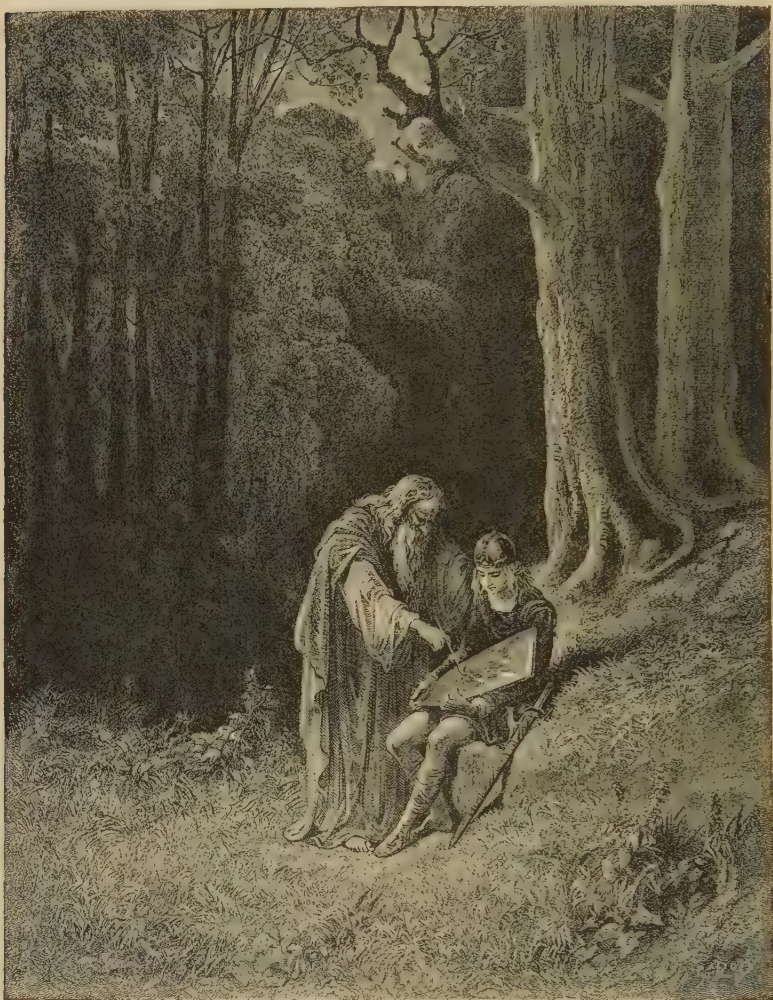
And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully:
 "O mine have ebb'd away for evermore,
 And all thro' following you to this wild wood,
 Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
 Lo now, what hearts have men! they never mount
 As high as woman in her selfless mood.

And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn my song,
 Take one verse more — the lady speaks it — this:

"My name, once mine, now thine,
 is closelier mine,
 For fame, could fame be mine, that fame were thine,
 And shame, could shame be thine, that shame were mine.
 So trust me not at all or all in all."

"Says she not well? and there is more — this rhyme
 Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the Queen,
 That burst in dancing, and the pearls were spilt;
 Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept.
 But nevermore the same two sister pearls
 Ran down the silken thread to kiss each other
 On her white neck — so is it with this rhyme:
 It lives dispersedly in many hands,
 And every minstrel sings it differently;
 Yet is there one true line, the pearl of pearls:
 'Man dreams of Fame while woman wakes to love.'
 Yea! Love, tho' Love were of the grossest, carves
 A portion from the solid present, eats
 And uses, careless of the rest; but Fame,
 The Fame that follows death is nothing to us;
 And what is Fame in life but half-disfame,
 And counterchanged with darkness? ye yourself
 Know well that Envy calls you Devil's son,
 And since ye seem the Master of all Art,
 They fain would make you Master of all vice."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and said,
 "I once was looking for a magic weed,
 And found a fair young squire who sat alone,
 Had carved himself a knightly shield of wood,
 And then was painting on it fancied arms,
 Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
 In dexter chief; the scroll 'I follow fame.'
 And speaking not, but leaning over him,



*"And speaking not, but leaning over him,
I took his brush and blotted out the bird."*

I took his brush and blotted out the
bird,
And made a Gardener putting in
graft,
With this for motto, 'Rather use than
fame.'
You should have seen him blush; but
afterwards
He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,
For you, methinks you think you love
me well;
For me, I love you somewhat; rest:
and Love

Should have some rest and pleasure
in himself,
Not ever be too curious for a boon,
Too prurient for a proof against the
grain
Of him ye say ye love: but Fame with
men,
Being but ampler means to serve
mankind,
Should have small rest or pleasure in
herself,
But work as vassal to the larger
love,

That dwarfs the petty love of one to one.
 Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame again
 Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my boon!
 What other? for men sought to prove me vile,
 Because I fain had given them greater wits:
 And then did Envy call me Devil's son:
 The sick weak beast seeking to help herself
 By striking at her better miss'd, and brought
 Her own claw back, and wounded her own heart.
 Sweet were the days when I was all unknown,
 But when my name was lifted up, the storm
 Brake on the mountain and I cared not for it.
 Right well know I that Fame is half-disfame,
 Yet needs must work my work. That other fame,
 To one at least, who hath not children, vague,
 The cackle of the unborn about the grave,
 I cared not for it: a single misty star,
 Which is the second in a line of stars
 That seem a sword beneath a belt of three,
 I never gazed upon it but I dreamt
 Of some vast charm concluded in that star
 To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I fear,
 Giving you power upon me thro' this charm,
 That you might play me falsely, having power,
 However well ye think ye love me now
 (As sons of kings loving in pupilage
 Have turn'd to tyrants when they came to power)
 I rather dread the loss of use than fame;
 If you—and not so much from wickedness,
 As some wild turn of anger, or a mood
 Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,
 To keep me all to your own self,—or else
 A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,—
 Should try this charm on whom ye say ye love."

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in wrath:

"Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.
 Good!

Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it out;
 And being found take heed of Vivien.
 A woman and not trusted, doubtless I
 Might feel some sudden turn of anger born
 Of your misfaith; and your fine epithet
 Is accurate too, for this full love of mine
 Without the full heart back may merit well
 Your term of overstrain'd. So used as I,
 My daily wonder is, I love at all.
 And as to woman's jealousy, O why not?
 O to what end, except a jealous one,
 And one to make me jealous if I love,
 Was this fair charm invented by yourself?
 I well believe that all about this world
 Ye cage a buxom captive here and there,
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower
 From which is no escape for evermore."

Then the great Master merrily answer'd her:
 "Full many a love in loving youth was mine;
 I needed then no charm to keep them mine
 But youth and love; and that full heart of yours
 Whereof ye prattle, may now assure you mine;
 So live uncharm'd. For those who wrought it first,
 The wrist is parted from the hand that waved,
 The feet un-mortised from their ankle-bones
 Who paced it, ages back: but will ye hear
 The legend as in guerdon for your rhyme?

"There lived a king in the most Eastern East,
 Less old than I, yet older, for my blood
 Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.
 A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,
 Whose bark had plunder'd twenty nameless isles;
 And passing one, at the high peep of dawn,
 He saw two cities in a thousand boats
 All fighting for a woman on the sea.
 And pushing his black craft among them all,
 He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought her off,



*"And pushing his black craft among them all,
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought her off."*

With loss of half his people arrow-
slain;
A maid so smooth, so white, so won-
derful,
They said a light came from her when
she moved:
And since the pirate would not yield
her up,
The King impaled him for his
piracy;
Then made her Queen: but those isle-
nurtured eyes
Waged such unwilling tho' successful
war

On all the youth, they sicken'd; coun-
cils thinn'd,
And armies waned, for magnet-like
she drew
The rustiest iron of old fighters'
hearts;
And beasts themselves would worship;
camels knelt
Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain
back
That carry kings in castles, bow'd
black knees
Of homage, ringing with their serpent
hands,

To make her smile, her golden ankle-bells.
 What wonder, being jealous, that he sent
 His horns of proclamation out thro' all
 The hundred under-kingdoms that he sway'd
 To find a wizard who might teach the King
 Some charm, which being wrought upon the Queen
 Might keep her all his own: to such a one
 He promised more than ever king has given,
 A league of mountain full of golden mines,
 A province with a hundred miles of coast,
 A palace and a princess, all for him:
 But on all those who tried and fail'd, the King
 Pronounced a dismal sentence, meaning by it
 To keep the list low and pretenders back,
 Or like a king, not to be trifled with—
 Their heads should moulder on the city gates.
 And many tried and fail'd, because the charm
 Of nature in her overbore their own:
 And many a wizard brow bleach'd on the walls:
 And many weeks a troop of carrion crows
 Hung like a cloud above the gateway towers."

And Vivien breaking in upon him, said:
 "I sit and gather honey; yet, methinks,
 Thy tongue has tript a little: ask thyself.
 The lady never made *unwilling* war
 With those fine eyes: she had her pleasure in it,
 And made her good man jealous with good cause.
 And lived there neither dame nor damsel then
 Wroth at a lover's loss? were all as tame,
 I mean, as noble, as their Queen was fair?
 Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,
 Or pinch a murderous dust into her drink,
 Or make her paler with a poison'd rose?
 Well, those were not our days: but did they find
 A wizard? Tell me, was he like to thee?"

She ceased, and made her lithe arm round his neck
 Tighten, and then drew back, and let her eyes
 Speak for her, glowing on him, like a bride's
 On her new lord, her own, the first of men.

He answer'd laughing, "Nay, not like to me.
 At last they found — his foragers for charms —
 A little glassy-headed hairless man,
 Who lived alone in a great wild on grass;
 Read but one book, and ever reading grew
 So grated down and filed away with thought,
 So lean his eyes were monstrous; while the skin
 Clung but to crate and basket, ribs and spine.
 And since he kept his mind on one sole aim,
 Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted flesh,
 Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall
 That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting men
 Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,
 And heard their voices talk behind the wall,
 And learnt their elemental secrets, powers
 And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye
 Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,
 And lash'd it at the base with slanting storm;
 Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,
 When the lake whiten'd and the pine-wood roar'd,
 And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow, sunn'd
 The world to peace again: here was the man.
 And so by force they dragg'd him to the King.
 And then he taught the King to charm the Queen
 In such-wise, that no man could see her more,
 Nor saw she save the King, who wrought the charm,
 Coming and going, and she lay as dead,
 And lost all use of life: but when the King
 Made proffer of the league of golden mines,

The province with a hundred miles of
coast,
The palace and the princess, that old
man
Went back to his old wild, and lived
on grass,
And vanish'd, and his book came
down to me."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily:
"Ye have the book: the charm is
written in it:
Good: take my counsel: let me know
it at once:
For keep it like a puzzle chest in
chest,
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd
thirty-fold,
And whelm all this beneath as vast a
mound
As after furious battle turfs the
slain
On some wild down above the windy
deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden
means
To dig, pick, open, find and read the
charm:
Then, if I tried it, who should blame
me then?"

And smiling as a master smiles at
one
That is not of his school, nor any
school
But that where blind and naked
Ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,
On all things all day long, he answer'd
her:

"Thou read the book, my pretty
Vivien!
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample
marge,
And every marge enclosing in the
midst
A square of text that looks a little
blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of
fleas;
And every square of text an awful
charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone
by.
So long, that mountains have arisen
since
With cities on their flanks — thou read
the book!
And every margin scribbled, crost,
and cramm'd
With comment, densest condensation,
hard

To mind and eye; but the long sleep-
less nights
Of my long life have made it easy to
me.
And none can read the text, not even
I;
And none can read the comment but
myself;
And in the comment did I find the
charm.
O, the results are simple; a mere
child
Might use it to the harm of any one,
And never could undo it: ask no
more:
For tho' you should not prove it upon
me,
But keep that oath ye swear, ye
might, perchance,
Assay it on some one of the Table
Round,
And all because ye dream they babble
of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger,
said:
"What dare the full-fed liars say of
me?
They ride abroad redressing human
wrongs!
They sit with knife in meat and wine
in horn!
They bound to holy vows of chastity!
Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.
But you are man, you well can under-
stand
The shame that cannot be explain'd
for shame.
Not one of all the drove should touch
me: swine!"

Then answer'd Merlin careless of
her words:
"You breathe but accusation vast and
vague,
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless.
If ye know,
Set up the charge ye know, to stand
or fall!"

And Vivien answer'd frowning
wrathfully:
"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence,
him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er
his wife
And two fair babes, and went to dis-
tant lands;
Was one year gone, and on returning
found
Not two but three? there lay the
reckling, one
But one hour old! What said the
happy sire?"

A seven-months' babe had been a truer gift.
Those twelve sweet moons confused his fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin, "Nay, I know the tale.
Sir Valence wedded with an outland dame:
Some cause had kept him sunder'd from his wife:
One child they had: it lived with her: she died:
His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valence to bring home the child.
He brought, not found it therefore: take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sag-ramore,
That ardent man? 'to pluck the flower in season,'
So says the song, 'I trow it is no treason.'
O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the hour?"

And Merlin answer'd, "Overquick art thou
To catch a loathly plume fall'n from the wing
Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole prey
Is man's good name: he never wrong'd his bride.
I know the tale. An angry gust of wind
Puff'd out his torch among the myriad-room'd
And many-corridor'd complexities
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a door,
And darkling felt the sculptured ornament
That wreathen round it made it seem his own;
And wearied out made for the couch and slept,
A stainless man beside a stainless maid;
And either slept, nor knew of other there;
Till the high dawn piercing the royal rose
In Arthur's casement glimmer'd chastely down,
Blushing upon them blushing, and at once
He rose without a word and parted from her:

But when the thing was blazed about the court,
The brute world howling forced them into bonds,
And as it chanced they are happy, being pure."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were likely too.
What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale
And of the horrid foulness that he wrought,
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of Christ,
Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.
What, in the precincts of the chapel-yard,
Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
And by the cold Hic Jacets of the dead!"

And Merlin answer'd careless of her charge,
"A sober man is Percivale and pure;
But once in life was fluster'd with new wine,
Then paced for coolness in the chapel-yard;
Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught
And meant to stamp him with her master's mark;
And that he sinn'd is not believable;
For, look upon his face! — but if he sinn'd,
The sin that practice burns into the blood,
And not the one dark hour which brings remorse,
Will brand us, after, of whose fold we be:
Or else were he, the holy king, whose hymns
Are chanted in the minster, worse than all.
But is your spleen froth'd out, or have ye more?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet in wrath:
Traitor what say ye to Sir Lancelot, friend
"O ay; or true? with that commerce the Queen,
I ask you, is it clamor'd by the child,
Or whisper'd in the corner? do ye know it?"

To which he answer'd sadly, "Yea, I know it.
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
To fetch her, and she watch'd him from her walls.

A rumor runs, she took him for the King,
So fixt her fancy on him: let them be.
But have ye no one word of loyal praise
For Arthur, blameless King and stainless man?"

She answer'd with a low and chuckling laugh:
"Man! is he man at all, who knows and winks?
Sees what his fair bride is and does, and winks?
By which the good King means to blind himself,
And blinds himself and all the Table Round
To all the foulness that they work. Myself
Could call him (were it not for womanhood)
The pretty, popular name such manhood earns,
Could call him the main cause of all their crime;
Yea, were he not crown'd King, coward, and fool."

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing, said:
"O true and tender! O my liege and King!
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eye-witness fain
Have all men true and leal, all women pure;
How, in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poach'd filth that floods the middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame!"

But Vivien, deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommenced, and let her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean.

Her words had issue other than she will'd.
He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And mutter'd in himself, "Tell *her* the charm!
So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare the next, and if she have it not
So will she rail. What did the wanton say?
'Not mount as high;' we scarce can sink as low:
For men at most differ as Heaven and earth,
But women, worst and best, as Heaven and Hell.
I know the Table Round, my friends of old;
All brave, and many generous, and some chaste.
She cloaks the scar of some repulse with lies;
I well believe she tempted them and fail'd,
Being so bitter: for fine plots may fail,
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well as face
With colors of the heart that are not theirs.
I will not let her know: nine tithes of times
Face-flatterer and backbiter are the same.
And they, sweet soul, that most impute a crime
Are prone to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental range; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all;
Yea, they would pare the mountain to the plain,
To leave an equal baseness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so small,
Inflate themselves with some insane delight,
And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and see
Her godlike head crown'd with spiritual fire,
And touching other worlds. I am weary of her."

He spoke in words part heard, in whispers part,
Half-suffocated in the hoary fell

And many-winter'd fleece of throat
and chin.
But Vivien, gathering somewhat of
his mood,
And hearing "harlot" mutter'd twice
or thrice,
Leapt from her session on his lap, and
stood
Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome
sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of
death!
White was her cheek; sharp breaths
of anger puff'd
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-
clench'd
Went faltering sideways downward to
her belt,
And feeling; had she found a dagger
there
(For in a wink the false love turns
to hate)
She would have stabb'd him; but she
found it not:
His eye was calm, and suddenly she
took
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.
Then her false voice made way, broken
with sobs:

"O crueller than was ever told in
tale,
Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd
love!
O cruel, there was nothing wild or
strange,
Or seeming shameful—for what
shame in love,
So love be true, and not as yours is—
nothing
Poor Vivien had not done to win his
trust
Who call'd her what he call'd her—
all her crime,
All—all—the wish to prove him
wholly hers."

She mused a little, and then clapt
her hands
Together with a wailing shriek, and
said:
"Stabb'd through the heart's affec-
tions to the heart!
Seethed like the kid in its own mother's
milk!
Kill'd with a word worse than a life
of blows!
I thought that he was gentle, being
great:
O God, that I had loved a smaller man!
I should have found in him a greater
heart.
O, I, that flattering my true passion,
saw

The knights, the court, the King, dark
in your light,
Who loved to make men darker than
they are,
Because of that high pleasure which
I had
To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship—I am answer'd, and
henceforth
The course of life that seem'd so
flowery to me
With you for guide and master, only
you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken
short,
And ending in a ruin—nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and
there,
If the wolf spare me, weep my life
away,
Kill'd with inutterable unkindliness."

She paused, she turn'd away, she
hung her head,
The snake of gold slid from her hair,
the braid
Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept
afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker
toward the storm
In silence, while his anger slowly
died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed
her true:
Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
"Come from the storm," and having
no reply,
Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and
the face
Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or
shame;
Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-
touching terms,
To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in
vain.
At last she let herself be conquer'd by
him,
And as the cageling newly flown re-
turns,
The seeming-injured, simple-hearted
thing
Came to her old perch back, and set-
tled there.
There while she sat, half-falling from
his knees,
Half-nestled at his heart, and since he
saw
The slow tear creep from her closed
eye-lid yet,
About her, more in kindness than in
love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding
arm.
But she dislink'd herself at once and
rose,

Her arms upon her breast across, and
stood,
A virtuous gentlewoman deeply
wrong'd,
Upright and flush'd before him: then
she said:

"There must be now no passages of
love
Betwixt us twain henceforward ever-
more;
Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,
What should be granted which your
own gross heart
Would reckon worth the taking? I
will go.
In truth, but one thing now — better
have died
Thrice than have ask'd it once — could
make me stay —
That proof of trust — so often ask'd
in vain!
How justly, after that vile term of
yours,
I find with grief! I might believe you
then,
Who knows? once more. Lo! what
was once to me
Mere matter of the fancy, now hath
grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.
Farewell; think gently of me, for I
fear
My fate or folly, passing gayer youth
For one so old, must be to love thee
still.
But ere I leave thee let me swear once
more
That if I schemed against thy peace
in this,
May yon just heaven, that darkens
o'er me, send
One flash, that, missing all things else,
may make
My scheming brain a cinder, if I
lie."

Scarce had she ceased, when out of
heaven a bolt
(For now the storm was close above
them) struck,
Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
With darted spikes and splinters of
the wood
The dark earth round. He raised his
eyes and saw
The tree that shone white-listed thro'
the gloom.
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard
her oath,
And dazzled by the livid-flickering
fork,
And deafen'd with the stammering
cracks and claps
That follow'd, flying back and crying
out,

"O Merlin, tho' you do not love me,
save,
Yet save me!" clung to him and
hugg'd him close;
And call'd him dear protector in her
fright,
Nor yet forgot her practice in her
fright,
But wrought upon his mood and
hugg'd him close.
The pale blood of the wizard at her
touch
Took gayer colors, like an opal
warm'd.
She blamed herself for telling hearsay
tales:
She shook from fear, and for her fault
she wept
Of petulancy; she call'd him lord and
liege,
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of
eve,
Her God, her Merlin, the one passion-
ate love
Of her whole life; and ever overhead
Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten
branch
Snapt in the rushing of the river-rain
Above them; and in change of glare
and gloom
Her eyes and neck glittering went and
came;
Till now the storm, its burst of passion
spent,
Moaning and calling out of other
lands,
Had left the ravaged woodland yet
once more
To peace; and what should not have
been had been,
For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,
Had yielded, told her all the charm,
and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth
the charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,
And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
And lost to life and use and name and
fame.

Then crying "I have made his glory
mine,"
And shrieking out "O fool!" the har-
lot leapt
Adown the forest, and the thicket
closed
Behind her, and the forest echo'd
"fool."

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the loveable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to
the east

Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazon'd on the shield
In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
Leaving her household and good father, climb'd
That eastern tower, and entering barr'd her door,
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:
And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have kill'd, but God
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his name?
He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by that name
Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.

For Arthur, long before they crown'd him King,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and cave
Like its own mists to all the mountain side:

For here two brothers, one a king, had met
And fought together; but their names were lost;
And each had slain his brother at a blow;
And down they fell and made the glen abhorr'd:
And there they lay till all their bones were bleach'd,
And lichen'd into color with the crags:
And he, that once was king, had on a crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside.
And Arthur came, and laboring up the pass,
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, "Lo, thou likewise shalt be King."

Thereafter, when a King, he had the gems
Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them to his knights,
Saying "These jewels, whereupon I chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the King's—
For public use: henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these:
For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
The heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land
Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus he spoke:
And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,
With purpose to present them to the Queen,
When all were won; but meaning all at once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and
the last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his
court
Hard on the river nigh the place which
now
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a
joust
At Camelot, and when the time drew
nigh.
Spake (for she had been sick) to
Guinevere,
"Are you so sick, my Queen, you can-
not move
To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord,"
she said, "ye know it."
"Then will ye miss," he answer'd,
"the great deeds
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the
lists,
A sight ye love to look on." And the
Queen
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt lan-
guidly
On Lancelot, where he stood beside
the King.
He thinking that he read her meaning
there,
"Stay with me, I am sick; my love is
more
Than many diamonds," yielded; and
a heart
Love-loyal to the least wish of the
Queen
(However much he yearn'd to make^q
complete
The tale of diamonds for his destined
boon)
Urged him to speak against the truth,
and say,
"Sir King, mine ancient wound is
hardly whole,
And lets me from the saddle;" and
the King
Glanced first at him, then her, and
went his way.
No sooner gone than suddenly she
began:

"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot,
much to blame!
Why go ye not to these fair jousts?
the knights
Are half of them our enemies, and the
crowd
Will murmur, 'Lo the shameless¹⁰
ones, who take
Their pastime now the trustful King
is gone!'"
Then Lancelot vext at having lied in
vain:
"Are ye so wise? ye were not once
so wise,
My Queen, that summer, when ye
loved me first.

Then of the crowd ye took no more
account
Than of the myriad cricket of the
mead,
When its own voice clings to each
blade of grass,
And every voice is nothing. As to
knights,
Them surely can I silence with all
ease.
But now my loyal worship is allow'd⁽¹⁾
Of all men: many a bard, without
offence,
Has link'd our names together in his
lay,
Lancelot, the flower of bravery,
Guinevere,
The pearl of beauty: and our knights
at least
Have pledged us in this union, while
the King
Would listen smiling. How then? is
there more?
Has Arthur spoken aught? or would
yourself,
Now weary of my service and devoir,
Henceforth be truer to your faultless
lord?"

She broke into a little scornful¹²
laugh:
"Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the fault-
less King,
That passionate perfection, my good
lord—
But who can gaze upon the Sun in
heaven?
He never spake word of reproach to
me,
He never had a glimpse of mine un-
truth,
He cares not for me: only here to-day
There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his
eyes:
Some meddling rogue has tamper'd
with him—else
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,¹³
To make them like himself: but,
friend, to me
He is all fault who hath no fault at
all:
For who loves me must have a touch
of earth;
The low sun makes the color: I am
yours,
Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by
the bond.
And therefore hear my words: go to
the jousts:
The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break
our dream
When sweetest; and the vermin
voices here
May buzz so loud—we scorn them,
but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights;
 "And with what face, after my pretext made,
 Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot,
 I
 Before a King who honors his own work,
 As if it were his God's?"

"Yea," said the Queen,
 "A moral child without the craft to rule,
 Else had he not lost me: but listen to me,
 If I must find you wit: we hear it said
 That men go down before your spear at a touch,
 But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name,
 This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown:
 Win! by this kiss you will: and our true King
 Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
 As all for glory; for to speak him true,
 Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem,
 No keener hunter after glory breathes.
 He loves it in his knights more than himself:
 They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
 Wroth at himself. Not willing to be known,
 He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,
 Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot,
 And there among the solitary downs,
 Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;
 Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,
 That all in loops and links among the dales
 Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
 Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers.
 Thither he made, and blew the gate-way horn.
 Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man,
 Who let him into lodging and disarm'd.
 And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless man;
 And issuing found the lord of Astolat
 With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,

Moving to meet him in the castle court;
 And close behind them stept the lily maid
 Elaine, his daughter: mother of the house
 There was not: some light jest among them rose
 With laughter dying down as the great knight
 Approach'd them: then the Lord of Astolat:
 "Whence comest thou, my guest, and by what name
 Livest between the lips? for by thy state
 And presence I might guess thee chief of those,
 After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls.
 Him have I seen: the rest, his Table Round,
 Known as they are, to me they are unknown."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights:
 "Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,
 What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield.
 But since I go to joust as one unknown
 At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
 Hereafter ye shall know me — and the shield —
 I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
 Blank, or at least with some device not mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat,
 "Here is Torre's:
 Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre.
 And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
 His ye can have." Then added plain Sir Torre,
 "Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it."
 Here laugh'd the father saying, "Fie, Sir Churl,
 Is that an answer for a noble knight?
 Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger here,
 He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
 Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,
 And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
 To make her thrice as wilful as before."

"Nay, father, nay good father,
shame me not
Before this noble knight," said young
Lavaine,
"For nothing. Surely I but play'd
on Torre:

He seem'd so sullen, vext he could
not go:
A jest, no more! for, knight, the
maiden dreamt
That some one put this diamond in
her hand,



*"Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so tost about."*

And that it was too slippery to be
held,
And slipt and fell into some pool or
stream,
The castle-well, belike; and then I
said
That if I went and if I fought and
won it
(But all was jest and joke among our-
selves)
Then must she keep it safelier. All
was jest.
But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble
knight:
Win shall I not, but do my best to
win:

Young as I am, yet would I do my
best."

"So ye will grace me," answer'd
Lancelot,
Smiling a moment, "with your fellow-
ship
O'er these waste downs whereon I
lost myself,
Then were I glad of you as guide and
friend:
And you shall win this diamond, —
as I hear
It is a fair large diamond, — if ye
may,
And yield it to this maiden, if ye
will."

"A fair large diamond," added plain ²⁰
 Sir Torre,
 "Such be for queens, and not for simple maids."
 Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
 Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
 Flush'd slightly at the slight disparagement
 Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
 Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd:
 "If what is fair be but for what is fair,
 And only queens are to be counted so,
 Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid
 Might wear as fair a jewel as is on ²⁴⁰
 earth,
 Not violating the bond of like to like."

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid Elaine,
 Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,
 Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
 The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
 In battle with the love he bare his lord,
 Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.
 Another sinning on such heights with one,
 The flower of all the west and all the world,
 Had been the sleeker for it: but in ²⁵⁰
 him
 His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
 And drove him into wastes and solitudes
 For agony, who was yet a living soul.
 Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man
 That ever among ladies ate in hall,
 And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
 However marr'd, of more than twice her years,
 Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,
 And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
 And loved him, with that love which, ²⁶⁰
 was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,
 Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
 Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain

Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
 But kindly man moving among his kind:
 Whom they with meats and vintage of their best
 And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.
 And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,
 And ever well and readily answer'd he:
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at ²⁷⁰
 Guinevere,
 Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,
 Heard from the Baron that, ten years before,
 The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
 "He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design
 Against my house, and him they caught and maim'd;
 But I, my sons, and little daughter fled
 From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods
 By the great river in a boatman's hut.
 Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon ²⁸⁰
 hill."

"O there, great lord, doubtless," Lavaine said, rapt
 By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth
 Toward greatness in its elder, "you have fought.
 O tell us—for we live apart—you know
 Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lancelot spoke
 And answer'd him at full, as having been
 With Arthur in the fight which all day long
 Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem;
 And in the four loud battles by the shore
 Of Duglas; that on Bassa; then the ²⁹⁰
 war
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts
 Of Celidon the forest; and again
 By castle Gurnion, where the glorious King
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
 Carved of one emerald center'd in a sun
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed;

And at Caerleon had he helped his
lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild
white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
And up in Agned-Cathregonion too, 364
And down the waste sand-shores of
Trath Treroit,
Where many a heathen fell; "and on
the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table
Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and
him,
And break them; and I saw him, after,
stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to
plume
Red as the rising sun with heathen
blood,
And seeing me, with a great voice he
cried,
'They are broken, they are broken!' 365
for the King,
However mild he seems at home, nor
cares
For triumph in our mimic wars, the
jousts —
For if his own knight cast him down,
he laughs
Saying, his knights are better men
than he —
Yet in this heathen war the fire of
God
Fills him: I never saw his like: there
lives
No greater leader."

While he utter'd this,
Low to her own heart said the lily
maid,
"Save your great self, fair lord; 366
and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleas-
antry —
Being mirthful he, but in a stately
kind —
She still took note that when the
living smile
Died from his lips, across him came
a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which
again,
Whenever in her hovering to and
fro
The lily maid had striven to make him
cheer,
There brake a sudden-beaming ten-
derness
Of manners and of nature: and she
thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, 367
for her.
And all night long his face before her
lived,

As when a painter, poring on a face,
Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the
man
Behind it, and so paints him that his
face,
The shape and color of a mind and
life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best
And fullest; so the face before her
lived,
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence,
full
Of noble things, and held her from
her sleep.
Till rather she rose, half-cheated in the 368
thought
She needs must bid farewell to sweet
Lavaïne.
First as in fear, step after step, she
stole
Down the long tower-stairs, hesitat-
ing:
Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in
the court,
"This shield, my friend, where is it?"
and Lavaïne
Past inward, as she came from out
the tower.
There to his proud horse Lancelot
turn'd, and smooth'd
The glossy shoulder, humming to
himself.
Half-envious of the flattering hand,
she drew
Nearer and stood. He look'd, and 369
more amazed
Than if seven men had set upon him,
saw
The maiden standing in the dewy
light.
He had not dream'd she was so beau-
tiful.
Then came on him a sort of sacred
fear,
For silent, tho' he greeted her, she
stood
Rapt on his face as if it were a
God's.
Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,
That he should wear her favor at the
tilt.
She braved a riotous heart in asking
for it.
"Fair lord, whose name I know not — 370
noble it is,
I well believe, the noblest — will you
wear
My favor at this tourney?" "Nay,"
said he,
"Fair lady, since I never yet have
worn
Favor of any lady in the lists.
Such is my wont, as those, who know
me, know."
"Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in
wearing mine

Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble
lord,
That those who know should know
you." And he turn'd
Her counsel up and down within his
mind,
And found it true, and answer'd
"True, my child.
Well, I will wear it : fetch it out to
me :
What is it ? " and she told him " A red
sleeve
Broider'd with pearls," and brought
it : then he bound
Her token on his helmet, with a smile
Saying, " I never yet have done so
much
For any maiden living," and the blood
Sprang to her face and fill'd her with
delight ;
But left her all the paler, when
Lavaine
Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd
shield,
His brother's ; which he gave to
Lancelot,
Who parted with his own to fair
Elaine :
" Do me this grace, my child, to have
my shield
In keeping till I come." " A grace to
me,"
She answer'd, " twice to-day. I am
your squire ! "
Whereat Lavaine said, laughing,
" Lily maid,
For fear our people call you lily
maid
In earnest, let me bring your color
back ;
Once, twice, and thrice : now get you
hence to bed : "
So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his
own hand,
And thus they moved away : she
stay'd a minute,
Then made a sudden step to the gate,
and there —
Her bright hair blown about the
serious face
Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's
kiss —
Paused by the gateway, standing near
the shield
In silence, while she watch'd their
arms far-off
Sparkle, until they dipt below the
downs.
Then to her tower she climb'd, and
took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions
past away
Far o'er the long backs of the bushless
downs,

To where Sir Lancelot knew there
lived a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty
years
A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and
pray'd,
And ever laboring had scoop'd him-
self
In the white rock a chapel and a hall
On massive columns, like a shorecliff
cave,
And cells and chambers : all were fair
and dry ;
The green light from the meadows
underneath
Struck up and lived along the milky
roofs ;
And in the meadows tremulous aspen-
trees
And poplars made a noise of falling
showers.
And thither wending there that night
they bode.

But when the next day broke from
underground,
And shot red fire and shadows thro'
the cave,
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and
rode away :
Then Lancelot saying, " Hear, but
hold my name
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the
Lake."
Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant re-
verence,
Dearer to true young hearts than their
own praise,
But left him leave to stammer, " Is it
indeed ? "
And after muttering " The great
Lancelot,"
At last he got his breath and answer'd,
" One,
One have I seen — that other, our
liege lord,
The dread Pendragon, Britain's King
of kings,
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there — then were I stricken
blind
That minute, I might say that I had
seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they
reach'd the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his
eyes
Run thro' the peopled gallery which
half round
Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the
grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King,
who sat
Robed in red samite, easily to be
known,

Since to his crown the golden dragon
 clung,
 And down his robe the dragon writhed
 in gold,
 And from the carven-work behind
 him crept
 Two dragons gilded, sloping down to
 make
 Arms for his chair, while all the rest
 of them
 Thro' knots and loops and folds innu-
 merable
 Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they
 found
 The new design wherein they lost
 themselves,
 Yet with all ease, so tender was the
 work:
 And, in the costly canopy o'er him
 set,
 Blazed the last diamond of the name-
 less king.

Then Lancelot answer'd young
 Lavaine and said,
 "Me you call great: mine is the
 firmer seat,
 The truer lance: but there is many a
 youth
 Now crescent, who will come to all I
 am
 And overcome it; and in me there
 dwells
 No greatness, save it be some far-off
 touch
 Of greatness to know well I am not
 great:
 There is the man." And Lavaine
 gaped upon him
 As on a thing miraculous, and anon
 The trumpets blew; and then did
 either side,
 They that assail'd, and they that held
 the lists,
 Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly
 move,
 Meet in the midst, and there so
 furiously
 Shock, that a man far-off might well
 perceive,
 If any man that day were left afield,
 The hard earth shake, and a low thun-
 der of arms.
 And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
 Which were the weaker; then he
 hurl'd into it
 Against the stronger: little need to
 speak
 Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke,
 earl,
 Count, baron — whom he smote, he
 overthrew:

But in the field were Lancelot's
 kith and kin,

Ranged with the Table Round that
 held the lists,
 Strong men, and wrathful that a
 stranger knight
 Should do and almost overdo the
 deeds
 Of Lancelot; and one said to the
 other, "Lo!
 What is he? I do not mean the force
 alone —
 The grace and versatility of the man!
 Is it not Lancelot?" "When has
 Lancelot worn
 Favor of any lady in the lists?
 Not such his wont, as we, that know
 him, know."
 "How then? who then?" a fury
 seized them all,
 A fiery family passion for the name
 Of Lancelot, and a glory one with
 theirs.
 They couch'd their spears and prick'd
 their steeds, and thus,
 Their plumes driv'n backward by the
 wind they made
 In moving, all together down upon
 him
 Bare, as a wild wave in the wide
 North-sea,
 Green-glimmering toward the summit,
 bears, with all
 Its stormy crests that smoke against
 the skies,
 Down on a bark, and overbears the
 bark,
 And him that helms it, so they over-
 bore
 Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a
 spear
 Down-glancing lamed the charger, and
 a spear
 Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and
 the head
 Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt,
 and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and wor-
 shipfully;
 He bore a knight of old repute to the
 earth,
 And brought his horse to Lancelot
 where he lay.
 He up the side, sweating with agony,
 got,
 But thought to do while he might yet
 endure,
 And being lustily holpen by the
 rest,
 His party, — tho' it seem'd half-
 miracle
 To those he fought with, — drave his
 kith and kin,
 And all the Table Round that held
 the lists,
 Back to the barrier; then the trum-
 pets blew

Proclaiming his the prize, who wore
the sleeve
Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the
knights,
His party, cried "Advance and take
thy prize
The diamond;" but he answer'd,
"Diamond me
No diamonds! for God's love, a little
air!
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is
death!
Hence will I, and I charge you, follow
me not."

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly
from the field
With young Lavaine into the poplar
grove.
There from his charger down he slid,
and sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "Draw the
lance-head:"
"Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said
Lavaine,
"I dread me, if I draw it, you will
die."
But he, "I die already with it: draw —
Draw," — and Lavaine drew, and Sir
Lancelot gave
A marvellous great shriek and ghastly
groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and
down he sank
For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd
away.
Then came the hermit out and bare
him in,
There stanch'd his wound; and there,
in daily doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a
week
Hid from the wide world's rumor by
the grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling
showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he
lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled
the lists,
His party, knights of utmost North
and West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of des-
olate isles,
Came round their great Pendragon,
saying to him,
"Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we
won the day,
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath
left his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is
death."
"Heaven hinder," said the King, "that
such an one,

So great a knight as we have seen
to-day —
He seem'd to me another Lancelot —
Yea, twenty times I thought him
Lancelot —
He must not pass uncared for.
Wherefore, rise,
O Gawain, and ride forth and find the
knight.
Wounded and wearied needs must he
be near.
I charge you that you get at once to
horse.
And, knights and kings, there breathes
not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours is rashly
given:
His prowess was too wondrous. We
will do him
No customary honor: since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the
prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Rise and
take
This diamond, and deliver it, and
return,
And bring us where he is, and how he
fares,
And cease not from your quest until
ye find."

So saying, from the carven flower
above,
To which it made a restless heart, he
took,
And gave, the diamond: then from
where he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face
arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart,
a Prince
In the mid might and flourish of his
May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous,
fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and
Geraint
And Gareth, a good knight, but
therewithal
Sir Modred's brother, and the child
of Lot,
Nor often loyal to his word, and
now
Wroth that the King's command to
sally forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made
him leave
The banquet, and concourse of knights
and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and
went;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in
mood,
Past, thinking "Is it Lancelot who
hath come

Despite the wound he spake of, all for
 gain
 Of glory, and hath added wound to
 wound,
 And ridd'n away to die?" So fear'd
 the King,
 And, after two days' tarriance there,
 return'd.
 Then when he saw the Queen, em-
 bracing ask'd,
 "Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay,
 lord," she said.
 "And where is Lancelot?" Then the
 Queen amazed,
 "Was he not with you? won he not
 your prize?"
 "Nay, but one like him." "Why that
 like was he."
 And when the King demanded how
 she knew,
 Said, "Lord, no sooner had ye parted
 from us,
 Than Lancelot told me of a common
 talk
 That men went down before his spear
 at a touch,
 But knowing he was Lancelot; his
 great name
 Conquer'd; and therefore would he
 hide his name
 From all men, ev'n the King, and to
 this end
 Had made the pretext of a hindering
 wound,
 That he might joust unknown of all,
 and learn
 If his old prowess were in aught
 decay'd;
 And added, 'Our true Arthur, when
 he learns,
 Will well allow my pretext, as for
 gain
 Of purer glory.'"

Then replied the King:
 "Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it
 been,
 In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
 To have trusted me as he hath trusted
 thee.
 Surely his King and most familiar
 friend
 Might well have kept his secret. True,
 indeed,
 Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
 So fine a fear in our large Lancelot
 Must needs have moved my laughter:
 now remains
 But little cause for laughter: his own
 kin—
 Ill news, my Queen, for all who love
 him, this!—
 His kith and kin, not knowing, set
 upon him;
 So that he went sore wounded from
 the field:

Yet good news too: for goodly hopes
 are mine
 That Lancelot is no more a lonely
 heart.
 He wore, against his wont, upon his
 helm
 A sleeve of scarlet, broider'd with
 great pearls,
 Some gentle maiden's gift."

"Yea, lord," she said,
 "Thy hopes are mine," and saying
 that, she choked,
 And sharply turn'd about to hide her
 face,
 Past to her chamber, and there flung
 herself
 Down on the great King's couch, and
 writhed upon it,
 And clench'd her fingers till they bit
 the palm,
 And shriek'd out "Traitor" to the
 unhearing wall,
 Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose
 again,
 And moved about her palace, proud
 and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region
 round
 Rode with his diamond, wearied of
 the quest,
 Touch'd at all points, except the pop-
 lar grove,
 And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:
 Whom glittering in enamell'd arms
 the maid
 Glanced at, and cried, "What news
 from Camelot, lord?
 What of the knight with the red
 sleeve?" "He won."
 "I knew it," she said. "But parted
 from the jousts
 Hurt in the side," whereat she caught
 her breath;
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp
 lance go;
 Thereon she smote her hand: wellnigh
 she swoon'd:
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at
 her, came
 The Lord of Astolat out, to whom
 the Prince
 Reported who he was, and on what
 quest
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could
 not find
 The victor, but had ridd'n a random
 round
 To seek him, and had wearied of the
 search.
 To whom the Lord of Astolat, "Bide
 with us,
 And ride no more at random, noble
 Prince!

Here was the knight, and here he left
a shield;
This will he send or come for: further-
more
Our son is with him; we shall hear
anon,
Needs must we hear." To this the
courteous Prince
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair
Elaine:
Where could be found face daintier?
then her shape
From forehead down to foot, perfect
— again
From foot to forehead exquisitely
turn'd:
"Well—if I bide, lo! this wild flower
for me!"
And oft they met among the garden
yews,
And there he set himself to play upon
her
With sallying wit, free flashes from a
height
Above her, graces of the court, and
songs,
Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden
eloquence
And amorous adulation, till the
maid
Rebell'd against it, saying to him,
"Prince,
O loyal nephew of our noble King,
Why ask you not to see the shield he
left,
Whence you might learn his name?
Why slight your King,
And lose the quest he sent you on,
and prove
No surer than our falcon yesterday,
Who lost the hern we slipt her at,
and went
To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine
head," said he,
"I lose it, as we lose the lark in
heaven,
O damsel, in the light of your blue
eyes;
But an ye will it let me see the
shield."
And when the shield was brought, and
Gawain saw
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd
with gold,
Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,
and mock'd:
"Right was the King! our Lancelot!
that true man!"
"And right was I," she answer'd
merrily, "I,
Who dream'd my knight the greatest
knight of all."
"And if I dream'd," said Gawain,
"that you love

This greatest knight, your pardon! lo,
ye know it!
Speak therefore: shall I waste myself
in vain?"
Full simple was her answer, "What
know I?
My brethren have been all my fellow-
ship;
And I, when often they have talk'd
of love,
Wish'd it had been my mother, for
they talk'd,
Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so
myself—
I know not if I know what true love is,
But if I know, then, if I love not him,
I know there is none other I can love."
"Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye
love him well,
But would not, knew ye what all
others know,
And whom he loves." "So be it,"
cried Elaine,
And lifted her fair face and moved
away:
But he pursued her, calling, "Stay a
little!
One golden minute's grace! he wore
your sleeve:
Would he break faith with one I may
not name?
Must our true man change like a leaf
at last?
Nay—like enow: why then, far be it
from me
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his
loves!
And, damsel, for I deem you know
full well
Where your great knight is hidden,
let me leave
My quest with you; the diamond also;
here!
For if you love, it will be sweet to
give it;
And if he love, it will be sweet to have
it
From your own hand; and whether
he love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you
well
A thousand times!—a thousand times
farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we
two
May meet at court hereafter: there,
I think,
So ye will learn the courtesies of the
court,
We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which
he gave,
The diamond, and all wearied of the
quest

Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went,
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there told the King
What the King knew, "Sir Lancelot is the knight."
And added, "Sire, my liege, so much I learnt;
But fail'd to find him, tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;
For by mine head she knows his hiding-place."

The seldom-frowning King frown'd, and replied,
"Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word,
Linger'd that other, staring after him;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd abroad
About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues were loosed:
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat."
Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be, but most
Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old dame
Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news.
She, that had heard the noise of it before,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have stoop'd so low,
Marr'd her friend's aim with pale tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder flared:
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or thrice

Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the Queen, who sat
With lips severely placid, felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crush'd the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,
Crept to her father, while he mused alone,
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and said,
"Father, you call me wilful, and the fault
Is yours who let me have my will, and now,
Sweet father, will you let me lose my wits?"
"Nay," said he, "surely." "Wherefore, let me hence,"
She answer'd, "and find out our dear Lavaine."
"Ye will not lose your wits for dear Lavaine:
Bide," answer'd he: "we needs must hear anon
Of him, and of that other." "Ay," she said,
"And of that other, for I needs must hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,
Lest I be found as faithless in the quest
As yon proud Prince who left the quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.
The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,
My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, as ye know
When these have worn their tokens: let me hence

I pray you." Then her father nod-
ding said,
"Ay, ay, the diamond: wit ye well,
my child,
Right fain were I to learn this knight
were whole,
Being our greatest: yea, and you
must give it—
And sure I think this fruit is hung
too high
For any mouth to gape for save a
queen's—
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you
gone,
Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slipt
away,
And while she made her ready for
her ride,
Her father's latest word humm'd in
her ear,
"Being so very wilful you must go,"
And changed itself and echo'd in her
heart,
"Being so very wilful you must die."
But she was happy enough and shook
it off,
As we shake off the bee that buzzes
at us;
And in her heart she answer'd it and
said,
"What matter, so I help him back to
life?"
Then far away with good Sir Torre
for guide
Rode o'er the long backs of the bush-
less downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates
Came on her brother with a happy
face
Making a roan horse caper and curvet
For pleasure all about a field of
flowers:
Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she
cried, "Lavaine,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?"
He amazed,
"Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir
Lancelot!
How know ye my lord's name is Lan-
celot?"
But when the maid had told him all
her tale,
Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his
moods
Left them, and under the strange-
statued gate,
Where Arthur's wars were render'd
mystically,
Past up the still rich city to his
kin,
His own far blood, which dwelt at
Camelot;
And her, Lavaine across the poplar
grove

Led to the caves: there first she saw
the casque
Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet
sleeve,
Tho' carved and cut, and half the
pearls away,
Stream'd from it still; and in her
heart she laugh'd,
Because he had not loosed it from his
helm,
But meant once more perchance to
tourney in it.
And when they gain'd the cell wherein
he slept,
His battle-writhen arms and mighty
hands
Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a
dream
Of dragging down his enemy made
them move.
Then she that saw him lying unsleek,
unshorn,
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-
self,
Utter'd a little tender dolorous cry.
The sound not wonted in a place so
still
Woke the sick knight, and while he
roll'd his eyes
Yet blank from sleep, she started to
him, saying,
"Your prize the diamond sent you by
the King:"
His eyes glisten'd: she fancied "Is it
for me?"
And when the maid had told him all
the tale
Of King and Prince, the diamond sent,
the quest
Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she
knelt
Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
And laid the diamond in his open
hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the
child
That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd
her face.
At once she slipt like water to the
floor.
"Alas," he said, "your ride hath
wearied you.
Rest must you have." "No rest for
me," she said;
"Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at
rest."
What might she mean by that? his
large black eyes,
Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt
upon her,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed
itself
In the heart's colors on her simple
face;
And Lancelot look'd and was perplex
in mind,

And being weak in body said no more ;
But did not love the color ; woman's
love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so
turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he
slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro'
the fields,
And past beneath the weirdly-sculp-
tured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;
There bode the night : but woke with
dawn, and past
Down thro' the dim rich city to the
the fields,
Thence to the cave : so day by day
she past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended
him,
And likewise many a night : and
Lancelot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a
little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole,
at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,
seem
Uncourteous, even he : but the meek
maid
Sweetly forbore him ever, being to
him
Meeker than any child to a rough
nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's
first fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep
love
Upbore her ; till the hermit, skill'd in
all
The simples and the science of that
time,
Told him that her fine care had saved
his life.
And the sick man forgot her simple
blush,
Would call her friend and sister,
sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and
regret
Her parting step, and held her ten-
derly,
And loved her with all love except
the love
Of man and woman when they love
their best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the
death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her
first
She might have made this and that
other world

Another world for the sick man ; but
now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd
him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely
true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sick-
ness made
Full many a holy vow and pure re-
solve.
These, as but born of sickness, could
not live :
For when the blood ran lustier in him
again,
Full often the bright image of one
face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his
heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a
cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly
grace
Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he
answer'd not,
Or short and coldly, and she knew
right well
What the rough sickness meant, but
what this meant
She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd
her sight,
And drave her ere her time across the
fields
Far into the rich city, where alone
She murmur'd, "Vain, in vain : it
cannot be.
He will not love me : how then ? must
I die ?"
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few
notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and
o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, "Must
I die ?"
And now to right she turn'd, and now
to left,
And found no ease in turning or in
rest ;
And "Him or death," she mutter'd,
"death or him,"
Again and like a burthen, "Him or
death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt
was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her
sweet self
In that wherein she deem'd she look'd
her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she
thought

"If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
 If not, the victim's flowers before he fall."
 And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
 That she should ask some goodly gift of him
 For her own self or hers; "and do not shun
 To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
 Such service have ye done me, that I make
 My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I
 In mine own land, and what I will I can."
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
 But like a ghost without the power to speak.
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish,
 And bode among them yet a little space
 Till he should learn it; and one morn-
 - it chanced
 He found her in among the garden yews,
 And said, "Delay no longer, speak your wish,
 Seeing I go to-day": then out she brake:
 "Going? and we shall never see you more.
 And I must die for want of one bold word."
 "Speak: that I live to hear," he said,
 "is yours."
 Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
 "I have gone mad. I love you: let me die."
 "Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot,
 "what is this?"
 And innocently extending her white arms,
 "Your love," she said, "your love —
 to be your wife."
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chosen to wed,
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine:
 But now there never will be wife of mine."
 "No, no," she cried, "I care not to be wife,
 But to be with you still, to see your face,
 To serve you, and to follow you thro' the world."
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Nay, the world, the world,
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart

To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
 To blare its own interpretation — nay,
 Full ill then should I quit your brother's love,
 And your good father's kindness."
 And she said,
 "Not to be with you, not to see your face —
 Alas for me then, my good days are done."
 "Nay, noble maid," he answer'd, "ten times nay!
 This is not love: but love's first flash in youth,
 Most common: yea, I know it of mine own self:
 And you yourself will smile at your own self
 Hereafter, when you yield your flower of life
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice your age:
 And then will I, for true you are and sweet
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
 More specially should your good knight be poor,
 Endow you with broad land and territory
 Even to the half my realm beyond the seas,
 So that would make you happy: furthermore,
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my blood,
 In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your sake,
 And more than this I cannot."

While he spoke
 She neither blush'd nor shook, but deathly-pale
 Stood grasping what was nearest, then replied:
 "Of all this will I nothing;" and so fell,
 And thus they bore her swooning to her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black walls of yew
 Their talk had pierced, her father:
 "Ay, a flash,
 I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead.
 Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
 I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
 To blunt or break her passion."

Lancelot said,
 "That were against me: what I can
 I will;"
 And there that day remain'd, and
 toward even
 Sent for his shield: full meekly rose
 the maid,
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked
 shield;
 Then, when she heard his horse upon
 the stones,
 Unclasping flung the casement back,
 and look'd
 Down on his helm, from which her
 sleeve had gone.
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking
 sound;
 And she by tact of love was well aware
 That Lancelot knew that she was look-
 ing at him,
 And yet he glanced not up, nor waved
 his hand,
 Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away.
 This was the one discourtesy that he
 used.

So in her tower alone the maiden
 sat:
 His very shield was gone; only the
 case,
 Her own poor work, her empty labor,
 left.
 But still she heard him, still his picture
 form'd
 And grew between her and the pic-
 tured wall.
 Then came her father, saying in low
 tones,
 "Have comfort," whom she greeted
 quietly.
 Then came her brethren saying,
 "Peace to thee,
 Sweet sister," whom she answer'd with
 all calm.
 But when they left her to herself
 again,
 Death, like a friend's voice from a dis-
 tant field
 Approaching thro' the darkness,
 call'd; the owls
 Wailing had power upon her, and she
 mixt
 Her fancies with the sorrow-rifted
 glooms
 Of evening, and the moanings of the
 wind.

And in those days she made a little
 song,
 And call'd her song "The Song of
 Love and Death,"
 And sang it: sweetly could she make
 and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in
 vain, in vain;

And sweet is death who puts an end
 to pain:
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter
 death must be:
 Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death
 to me.
 O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made
 to fade away,
 Sweet death, that seems to make us
 loveless clay,
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that
 could be;
 I needs must follow death, who calls
 for me;
 Call and I follow, I follow! let me
 die."

High with the last line scaled her
 voice, and this,
 All in a fiery dawning wild with wind
 That shook the tower, the brothers
 heard, and thought
 With shuddering, "Hark the Phan-
 tom of the house
 That ever shrieks before a death,"
 and call'd
 The father, and all three in hurry and
 fear
 Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light
 of dawn
 Flared on her face, she shrilling, "Let
 me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we
 know,
 Repeating, till the word we know so
 well
 Becomes a wonder, and we know not
 why,
 So dwelt the father on her face, and
 thought
 "Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden
 fell,
 Then gave a languid hand to each,
 and lay,
 Speaking a still good-morrow with her
 eyes.
 At last she said, "Sweet brothers, yes-
 ter-night
 I seem'd a curious little maid again,
 As happy as when we dwelt among
 the woods,
 And when ye used to take me with
 the flood
 Up the great river in the boatman's
 boat.
 Only ye would not pass beyond the
 cape
 That has the poplar on it: there ye
 fixt

Your limit, oft returning with the
tide,
And yet I cried because ye would not
pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining
flood
Until we found the palace of the
King.
And yet ye would not: but this night
I dream'd
That I was all alone upon the flood,
And then I said, 'Now shall I have
my will:'
And there I woke, but still the wish
remain'd.
So let me hence that I may pass at
last
Beyond the poplar and far up the
flood,
Until I find the palace of the King.
There will I enter in among them all,
And no man there will dare to mock
at me;
But there the fine Gawain will wonder
at me,
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse
at me;
Gawain, who bade a thousand fare-
wells to me,
Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bade
me one:
And there the King will know me and
my love,
And there the Queen herself will pity
me,
And all the gentle court will welcome
me,
And after my long voyage I shall
rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my
child, ye seem
Light-headed, for what force is yours
to go
So far, being sick? and wherefore
would ye look
On this proud fellow again, who
scorns us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to
heave and move,
And bluster into stormy sobs and
say,
"I never loved him: an I meet with
him,
I care not howsoever great he be,
Then will I strike at him and strike
him down.
Give me good fortune, I will strike
him dead,
For this discomfort he hath done the
house."

To whom the gentle sister made
reply,
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor
be wroth,

Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's
fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to
love
Him of all men who seems to me the
highest."

"Highest?" the father answer'd,
echoing "highest?"
(He meant to break the passion in
her) "nay,
Daughter, I know not what you call
the highest;
But this I know, for all the people
know it,
He loves the Queen, and in an open
shame:
And she returns his love in open
shame;
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Asto-
lat:
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick
am I
For anger: these are slanders: never
yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
He makes no friend who never made
a foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me
pass,
My father, howsoe'er I seem to you,
Not all unhappy, having loved God's
best
And greatest, tho' my love had no
return:
Yet, seeing you desire your child to
live,
Thanks, but you work against your
own desire;
For if I could believe the things you
say
I should but die the sooner; wherefore
cease,
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly
man
Hither, and let me shrive me clean,
and die."

So when the ghostly man had come
and gone,
She with a face, bright as for sin for-
given,
Besought Lavaine to write as she
devised
A letter, word for word; and when he
ask'd
"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear
lord?
Then will I bear it gladly;" she re-
plied,
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all
the world,

But I myself must bear it." Then he wrote
 The letter she devised; which being writ
 And folded, "O sweet father, tender and true,
 Deny me not," she said—"ye never yet
 Denied my fancies—this, however strange,
 My latest: lay the letter in my hand
 A little ere I die, and close the hand
 Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.
 And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
 Then take the little bed on which I died
 For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's
 For richness, and me also like the Queen
 In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
 And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
 To take me to the river, and a barge
 Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
 I go in state to court, to meet the Queen.
 There surely I shall speak for mine own self,
 And none of you can speak for me so well.
 And therefore let our dumb old man alone
 Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
 Will guide me to that palace, to the doors."

She ceased: her father promised; whereupon
 She grew so cheerful that they deem'd her death
 Was rather in the fantasy than the blood.
 But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh
 Her father laid the letter in her hand,
 And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
 So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground,
 Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
 Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
 Past like a shadow thro' the field, that shone
 Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
 Pall'd all its length in blackest samite, lay.

There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
 So those two brethren from the chariot took
 And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
 Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
 The silken case with braided blazons,
 And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her
 "Sister, farewell for ever," and again
 "Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears.
 Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
 Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with the flood—
 In her right hand the lily, in her left
 The letter—all her bright hair streaming down—
 And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
 Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
 All but, her face, and that clear-featured face
 Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
 But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace craved
 Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
 The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
 Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and blow,
 With deaths of others, and almost his own,
 The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for he saw
 One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
 Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen agreed
 With such and so unmoved a majesty
 She might have seem'd her statue, but that he,
 Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd her feet
 For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
 The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
 In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the walls,
 And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.
 All in an oriel on the summer side,
 Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream,

They met, and Lancelot kneeling
utter'd, "Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my
joy,
Take, what I had not won except for
you,
These jewels, and make me happy,
making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on
earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the
swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these
are words:
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship
of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such
sin in words
Perchance, we both can pardon: but,
my Queen,
I hear of rumors flying thro' your
court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and
wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect: let rumors
be:
When did not rumors fly? these, as I
trust
That you trust me in your own noble-
ness,
I may not well believe that you be-
lieve."

While thus he spoke, half turn'd
away, the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering
vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast
them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood
was green;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold
passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the
gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

"It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the
Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and
wife.
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite
and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of
hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are
these?
Diamonds for me! they had been
thrice their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your
own.

To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for
me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only
this
Grant me, I pray you: have your joys
apart.
I doubt not that however changed,
you keep
So much of what is graceful: and
myself
Would shun to break those bounds of
courtesy
In which as Arthur's Queen I move
and rule:
So cannot speak my mind. An end
to this!
A strange one! yet I take it with
Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her
pearls;
Deck her with these; tell her, she
shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the
Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer—as a faith once fair
Was richer than these diamonds—
hers not mine—
Nay, by the mother of our Lord him-
self,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work
my will—
She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,
And, thro' the casement standing wide
for heat,
Flung them, and down they flash'd,
and smote the stream.
Then from the smitten surface flash'd,
as it were,
Diamonds to meet them, and they past
away.
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half
disdain
At love, life, all things, on the window
ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right
across
Where these had fallen, slowly past
the barge
Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest
night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not,
burst away
To weep and wail in secret; and the
barge,
On to the palace-doorway sliding,
paused.
There two stood arm'd, and kept the
door; to whom,
All up the marble stair, tier over
tier,

Were added mouths that gaped, and
 eyes that ask'd
 "What is it?" but that oarsman's
 haggard face,
 As hard and still as is the face that
 men
 Shape to their fancy's eye from broken
 rocks
 On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and
 they said,
 "He is enchanted, cannot speak —
 and she,
 Look how she sleeps — the Fairy
 Queen, so fair!
 Yea, but how pale! what are they?
 flesh and blood?
 Or come to take the King to Fairy-
 land?
 For some do hold our Arthur cannot
 die,
 But that he passes into Fairyland."

While thus they babbled of the
 King, the King
 Came girt with knights: then turn'd
 the tongueless man
 From the half-face to the full eye,
 and rose
 And pointed to the damsel, and the
 doors.
 So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percivale
 And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the
 maid;
 And reverently they bore her into
 hall.
 Then came the fine Gawain and won-
 der'd at her,
 And Lancelot later came and mused
 at her,
 And last the Queen herself, and pitied
 her:
 But Arthur spied the letter in her
 hand,
 Stoopt, took, brake seal, and read it;
 this was all:

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of
 the Lake,
 I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
 Come, for you left me taking no fare-
 well,
 Hither, to take my last farewell of
 you.
 I loved you, and my love had no
 return,
 And therefore my true love has been
 my death.
 And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,
 And to all other ladies, I make moan.
 Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
 Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lan-
 celot,
 As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read;
 And ever in the reading, lords and
 dames

Wept, looking often from his face who
 read
 To hers which lay so silent, and at
 times,
 So touch'd were they, half-thinking
 that her lips,
 Who had devised the letter, moved
 again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to
 them all:
 "My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that
 hear,
 Know that for this most gentle
 maiden's death
 Right heavy am I; for good she was
 and true,
 But loved me with a love beyond all
 love
 In women, whomsoever I have known.
 Yet to be loved makes not to love
 again;
 Not at my years, however it hold in
 youth.
 I swear by truth and knighthood that
 I gave
 No cause, not willingly, for such a
 love:
 To this I call my friends in testimony,
 Her brethren, and her father, who
 himself
 Besought me to be plain and blunt,
 and use,
 To break her passion, some discourtesy
 Against my nature: what I could, I
 did.
 I left her and I bade her no farewell;
 Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would
 have died,
 I might have put my wits to some
 rough use,
 And help'd her from herself."

Then said the Queen
 (Sea was her wrath, yet working after
 storm)
 "Ye might at least have done her so
 much grace,
 Fair lord, as would have help'd her
 from her death."
 He raised his head, their eyes met and
 hers fell,
 He adding,
 "Queen, she would not be content
 Save that I wedded her, which could
 not be.
 Then might she follow me thro' the
 world, she ask'd;
 It could not be. I told her that her
 love
 Was but the flash of youth, would
 darken down
 To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
 Toward one more worthy of her —
 then would I,

More specially were he, she wedded,
 poor,
 Estate them with large land and territory
 In mine own realm beyond the narrow
 seas,
 To keep them in all joyance: more
 than this
 I could not; this she would not, and
 she died."

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O
 my knight,
 It will be to thy worship, as my
 knight,
 And mine, as head of all our Table
 Round,
 To see that she be buried worship-
 fully."

So toward that shrine which then in
 all the realm
 Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly
 went
 The marshall'd Order of their Table
 Round,
 And Lancelot sad beyond his wont,
 to see,
 The maiden buried, not as one un-
 known,
 Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obse-
 quies,
 And mass, and rolling music, like a
 queen.
 And when the knights had laid her
 comely head
 Low in the dust of half-forgotten
 kings,
 Then Arthur spake among them,
 "Let her tomb
 Be costly, and her image thereupon,
 And let the shield of Lancelot at her
 feet
 Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
 And let the story of her dolorous
 voyage
 For all true hearts be blazon'd on her
 tomb
 In letters gold and azure!" which was
 wrought
 Thereafter; but when now the lords
 and dames
 And people, from the high door
 streaming, brake
 Disorderly, as homeward each, the
 Queen,
 Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he
 moved apart,
 Drew near, and sigh'd in passing,
 "Lancelot,
 Forgive me; mine was jealousy in
 love."
 He answer'd with his eyes upon the
 ground,
 "That is love's curse; pass on, my
 Queen, forgiven."

But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy
 brows,
 Approach'd him, and with full affec-
 tion said,

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in
 whom I have
 Most joy and most affiance, for I
 know
 What thou hast been in battle by my
 side,
 And many a time have watch'd thee
 at the tilt
 Strike down the lusty and long prac-
 tised knight,
 And let the younger and unskill'd
 go by
 To win his honor and to make his
 name,
 And loved thy courtesies and thee, a
 man
 Made to be loved; but now I would
 to God,
 Seeing the homeless trouble in thine
 eyes,
 Thou couldst have loved this maiden,
 shaped, it seems,
 By God for thee alone, and from her
 face,
 If one may judge the living by the
 dead,
 Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
 Who might have brought thee, now a
 lonely man
 Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
 Born to the glory of thy name and
 fame,
 My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of
 the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot, "Fair she
 was, my King,
 Pure, as you ever wish your knights
 to be.
 To doubt her fairness were to want an
 eye,
 To doubt her pureness were to want a
 heart —
 Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
 Could bind him, but free love will not
 be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freest,"
 said the King.
 "Let love be free; free love is for
 the best:
 And, after heaven, on our dull side of
 death,
 What should be best, if not so pure a
 love
 Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet
 thee
 She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I
 think,
 Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I
 know."

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but
 he went,
 And at the inrunning of a little brook
 Sat by the river in a cove, and
 watch'd
 The high reed wave, and lifted up his
 eyes
 And saw the barge that brought her
 moving down,
 Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and
 said
 Low in himself, "Ah simple heart and
 sweet,
 Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a
 love
 Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray
 for thy soul?
 Ay, that will I. Farewell too — now
 at last —
 Farewell, fair lily. 'Jealousy in
 love?'
 Not rather dead love's harsh heir,
 jealous pride?
 Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of
 love,
 May not your crescent fear for name
 and fame
 Speak, as it waxes, of a love that
 wanes?
 Why did the King dwell on my name
 to me?
 Mine own name shames me, seeming
 a reproach,
 Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
 Caught from his mother's arms —
 the wondrous one
 Who passes thro' the vision of the
 night —
 She chanted snatches of mysterious
 hymns
 Heard on the winding waters, eve and
 morn
 She kiss'd me saying, 'Thou art fair,
 my child,
 As a king's son,' and often in her
 arms
 She bare me, pacing on the dusky
 mere.
 Would she had drown'd me in it,
 where'er it be!
 For what am I? what profits me my
 name
 Of greatest knight? I fought for it,
 and have it:
 Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it,
 pain;
 Now grown a part of me: but what
 use in it?
 To make men worse by making my
 sin known?
 Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming
 great?
 Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a
 man
 Not after Arthur's heart! I needs
 must break

These bonds that so defame me: not
 without
 She wills it: would I, if she will'd it?
 nay,
 Who knows? but if I would not, then
 may God,
 I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
 To seize me by the hair and bear me
 far,
 And fling me deep in that forgotten
 mere,
 Among the tumbled fragments of the
 hills."

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorse-
 ful pain,
 Not knowing he should die a holy
 man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of
 prowess done
 In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
 Whom Arthur and his knighthood
 call'd The Pure,
 Had pass'd into the silent life of
 prayer,
 Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving
 for the cowl
 The helmet in an abbey far away
 From Camelot, there, and not long
 after, died.

And one, a fellow-monk among
 the rest,
 Ambrosius, loved him much beyond
 the rest,
 And honor'd him, and wrought into
 his heart
 A way by love that waken'd love
 within,
 To answer that which came: and as
 they sat
 Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darken-
 ing half
 The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
 That puff'd the swaying branches into
 smoke
 Above them, ere the summer when
 he died,
 The monk Ambrosius question'd
 Percivale:

"O brother, I have seen this yew-
 tree smoke,
 Spring after spring, for half a hun-
 dred years:
 For never have I known the world
 without,
 Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but
 thee,
 When first thou camest — such a
 courtesy

Spake thro' the limbs and in the
voice —
I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur's
hall;
For good ye are and bad, and like to
coins,
Some true, some light, but every one
of you
Stamp'd with the image of the King;
and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the
Table Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion
crost?"

"Nay," said the knight; "for no
such passion mine
But the sweet vision of the Holy
Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rival-
ries,
And earthly heats that spring and
sparkle out
Among us in the jousts, while women
watch
Who wins, who falls; and waste the
spiritual strength
Within us, better offer'd up to
Heaven."

To whom the monk: "The Holy
Grail! — I trust
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but
here too much
We moulder — as to things without I
mean —
Yet one of your own knights, a guest
of ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so
low
We heard not half of what he said.
What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes
and goes?"

"Nay, monk! what phantom?"
answer'd Percivale.
"The cup, the cup itself, from which
our Lord —
Drank at the last sad supper with his
own.
This, from the blessed land of Aro-
mat —
After the day of darkness, when the
dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah — the
good saint
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying
brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter
thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of
our Lord.

And there awhile it bode; and if a
man
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd
at once,
By faith, of all his ills. But then the
times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and
disappear'd."

To whom the monk: "From our
old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glaston-
bury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arvi-
ragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to
build;
And there he built with wattles from
the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours,
but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-
day?"

"A woman," answer'd Percivale,
"a nun,
And one no further off in blood from
me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the
stone,
A holy maid; tho' never maiden
glow'd,
But that was in her earlier maiden-
hood,
With such a fervent flame of human
love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced
and shot
Only to holy things; to prayer and
praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms.
And yet,
Nun as she was, the scandal of the
Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table
Round,
And the strange sound of an adulter-
ous race,
Across the iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all
the more.

"And he to whom she told her sins,
or what
Her all but utter whiteness held for
sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down thro' five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters
old,

From our Lord's time. And when
 King Arthur made
 His Table Round, and all men's hearts
 became
 Clean for a season, surely he had
 thought
 That now the Holy Grail would come
 again;
 But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it
 would come,
 And heal the world of all their wicked-
 ness!
 'O Father!' ask'd the maiden, 'might
 it come
 To me by prayer and fasting?' 'Nay,'
 said he,
 'I know not, for thy heart is pure as
 snow.'
 And so she pray'd and fasted, till the
 sun
 Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her,
 and I thought
 She might have risen and floated when
 I saw her.

"For on a day she sent to speak
 with me.
 And when she came to speak, behold
 her eyes
 Beyond my knowing of them, beauti-
 ful,
 Beyond all knowing of them, won-
 derful,
 Beautiful in the light of holiness.
 And 'O my brother Percivale,' she
 said,
 'Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy
 Grail:
 For, waked at dead of night, I heard
 a sound
 As of a silver horn from o'er the hills
 Blown, and I thought, "It is not
 Arthur's use
 To hunt by moonlight;" and the slen-
 der sound
 As from a distance beyond distance
 grew
 Coming upon me — O never harp nor
 horn,
 Nor aught we blow with breath, or
 touch with hand,
 Was like that music as it came; and
 then
 Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and
 silver beam,
 And down the long beam stole the
 Holy Grail,
 Rose-red with beatings in it, as if
 alive,
 Till all the white walls of my cell were
 dyed
 With rosy colors leaping on the wall;
 And then the music faded, and the
 Grail
 Past, and the beam decay'd, and from
 the walls

The rosy quiverings died into the
 night.
 So now the Holy Thing is here again
 Among us, brother, fast thou too and
 pray,
 And tell thy brother knights to fast
 and pray,
 That so perchance the vision may be
 seen
 By thee and those, and all the world
 be heal'd.'

"Then leaving the pale nun, I spake
 of this
 To all men; and myself fasted and
 pray'd
 Always, and many among us many a
 week
 Fasted and pray'd even to the utter-
 most,
 Expectant of the wonder that would
 be.

"And one there was among us, ever
 moved
 Among us in white armor, Galahad.
 'God make thee good as thou art
 beautiful,'
 Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him
 knight; and none,
 In so young youth, was ever made a
 knight
 Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when
 he heard
 My sister's vision, fill'd me with amaze;
 His eyes became so like her own, they
 seem'd
 Hers, and himself her brother more
 than I.

"Sister or brother none had he; but
 some
 Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some
 said
 Begotten by enchantment — chattering
 they,
 Life birds of passage piping up and
 down,
 That gape for flies — we know not
 whence they come;
 For when was Lancelot wanderingly
 lewd?

"But she, the wan sweet maiden,
 shore away
 Clean from her forehead all that
 wealth of hair
 Which made a silken mat-work for
 her feet;
 And out of this she plaited broad and
 long
 A strong sword-belt, and wove with
 silver thread
 And crimson in the belt a strange
 device,
 A crimson grail within a silver beam;

And saw the bright boy-knight, and
 bound it on him,
 Saying, 'My knight, my love, my
 knight of heaven,
 O thou, my love, whose love is one
 with mine,
 I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind
 my belt.
 Go forth, for thou shalt see what I
 have seen,
 And break thro' all, till one will crown
 thee king
 Far in the spiritual city : ' and as she
 spake
 She sent her deathless passion in her
 eyes
 Thro' him, and made him hers, and
 laid her mind
 On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle : O
 brother,
 In our great hall there stood a vacant
 chair,
 Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
 And carven with strange figures ; and
 in and out
 The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
 Of letters in a tongue no man could
 read.
 And Merlin call'd it 'The Siege peril-
 ous.'
 Perilous for good and ill ; 'for there,'
 he said,
 'No man could sit but he should lose
 himself :'
 And once by misadventure Merlin sat
 In his own chair, and so was lost ; but
 he,
 Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's
 doom,
 Cried, 'If I lose myself, I save my-
 self !'

"Then on a summer night it came
 to pass,
 While the great banquet lay along the
 hall,
 That Galahad would sit down in Mer-
 lin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat,
 we heard
 A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
 And rending, and a blast, and over-
 head
 Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
 And in the blast there smote along the
 hall
 A beam of light seven times more
 clear than day :
 And down the long beam stole the
 Holy Grail
 All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,
 And none might see who bare it, and
 it past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's
 face
 As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
 And staring each at other like dumb
 men
 Stood, till I found a voice and sware
 a vow.

"I sware a vow before them all,
 that I,
 Because I had not seen the Grail, would
 ride
 A twelvemonth and a day in quest of
 it,
 Until I found and saw it, as the nun
 My sister saw it ; and Galahad sware
 the vow,
 And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's
 cousin, sware,
 And Lancelot sware, and many among
 the knights,
 And Gawain sware, and louder than
 the rest."

Then spake the monk Ambrosius,
 asking him,
 "What said the King ? Did Arthur
 take the vow ?"

"Nay, for my lord," said Percivale,
 "the King,
 Was not in hall : for early that same
 day,
 Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit
 hold,
 An outraged maiden sprang into the
 hall
 Crying on help : for all her shining
 hair
 Was smear'd with earth, and either
 milky arm
 Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and
 all she wore
 Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is
 torn
 In tempest : so the King arose and
 went
 To smoke the scandalous hive of those
 wild bees
 That made such honey in his realm.
 Howbeit
 Some little of this marvel he too saw,
 Returning o'er the plain that then
 began
 To darken under Camelot ; whence the
 King
 Look'd up, calling aloud, 'Lo, there !
 the roofs
 Of our great hall are roll'd in thunder-
 smoke !
 Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by
 the bolt.'
 For dear to Arthur was that hall of
 ours,
 As having there so oft with all his
 knights

Feasted, and as the stateliest under
heaven.

"O brother, had you known our
mighty hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long
ago!
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by
roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rush-
ing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin
built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set
betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the
hall:
And in the lowest beasts are slaying
men,
And in the second men are slaying
beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect
men,
And on the fourth are men with grow-
ing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a
crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the
Northern Star.
And eastward fronts the statue, and
the crown
And both the wings are made of gold,
and flame
At sunrise till the people in far
fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen
hordes,
Behold it, crying, 'We have still a
King.'

"And, brother, had you known our
hall within,
Broader and higher than any in all
the lands!
Where twelve great windows blazon
Arthur's wars,
And all the light that falls upon the
board
Streams thro' the twelve great battles
of our King.
Nay, one there is, and at the eastern
end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of
mount and mere,
Where Arthur finds the brand Excali-
bur.
And also one to the west, and counter
to it,
And blank: and who shall blazon it?
when and how? —
O there, perchance, when all our wars
are done,

The brand Excalibur will be cast
away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode
the King,
In horror lest the work by Merlin
wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden van-
ish, wrapt
In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and
saw
The golden dragon sparkling over all:
And many of those who burnt the
hold, their arms
Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed
with smoke, and sear'd,
Follow'd, and in among bright faces,
ours,
Full of the vision, prest: and then the
King
Spake to me, being nearest, 'Perci-
vale,'
(Because the hall was all in tumult --
some
Vowing, and some protesting), 'what
is this?'

"O brother, when I told him what
had chanced,
My sister's vision, and the rest, his
face
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than
once,
When some brave deed seem'd to be
done in vain,
Darken; and 'Woe is me, my knights,'
he cried,
'Had I been here, ye had not sworn
the vow.'
Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself
been here,
My King, thou wouldst have sworn.'
'Yea, yea,' said he,
'Art thou so bold and hast not seen
the Grail?'

"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I
saw the light,
But since I did not see the Holy
Thing,
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'

"Then when he ask'd us, knight by
knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as
one:
'Nay, lord, and therefore have we
sworn our vows.'

"Lo now," said Arthur, 'have ye
seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to
see?'

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and
in a voice
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur,
call'd,
'But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy
Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry —
"O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow
me."'

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad,' said the
King, 'for such
As thou art is the vision, not for
these.
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a
sign —
Holier is none, my Percivale, than
she —
A sign to maim this Order which I
made.
But ye, that follow but the leader's
bell'
(Brother, the King was hard upon his
knights)
'Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,
And one hath sung and all the dumb
will sing.
Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath over-
borne
Five knights at once, and every
younger knight,
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
Till overborne by one, he learns — and
ye,
What are ye? Galahads? — no, nor
Percivales'
(For thus it pleased the King to range
me close
After Sir Galahad); 'nay,' said he,
'but men
With strength and will to right the
wrong'd, of power
To lay the sudden heads of violence
flat,
Knights that in twelve great battles
splash'd and dyed
The strong White Horse in his own
heathen blood —
But one hath seen, and all the blind
will see.
Go, since your vows are sacred, being
made:
Yet — for ye know the cries of all my
realm
Pass thro' this hall — how often, O my
knights,
Your places being vacant at my
side,
This chance of noble deeds will come
and go
Unchallenged, while ye follow wan-
dering fires
Lost in the quagmire! Many of you,
yea most,
Return no more: ye think I show my-
self

Too dark a prophet: come now, let
us meet
The morrow morn once more in one
full field
Of gracious pastime, that once more
the King,
Before ye leave him for this Quest,
may count
The yet-unbroken strength of all his
knights,
Rejoicing in that Order which he
made.'

"So when the sun broke next from
under ground,
All the great table of our Arthur
closed
And clash'd in such a tourney and so
full,
So many lances broken — never yet
Had Camelot seen the like, since
Arthur came;
And I myself and Galahad, for a
strength
Was in us from the vision, overthrew
So many knights that all the people
cried,
And almost burst the barriers in their
heat,
Shouting, 'Sir Galahad and Sir Per-
civale!'

"But when the next day brake
from under ground —
O brother, had you known our Came-
lot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so
old
The King himself had fears that it
would fall,
So strange, and rich, and dim; for
where the roofs
Totter'd toward each other in the
sky,
Met foreheads all along the street of
those
Who watch'd us pass; and lower, and
where the long
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the
necks
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
Thicker than drops from thunder,
showers of flowers
Fell as we past; and men and boys
astride
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us each by
name,
Calling 'God speed!' but in the ways
below
The knights and ladies wept, and rich
and poor
Wept, and the King himself could
hardly speak
For grief, and all in middle street the
Queen,

Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and
shriek'd aloud,
'This madness has come on us for our
sins.'

So to the Gate of the three Queens we
came,
Where Arthur's wars are render'd
mystically,
And thence departed every one his
way.

"And I was lifted up in heart, and
thought
Of all my late-shown prowess in the
lists,
How my strong lance had beaten down
the knights,
So many and famous names; and
never yet
Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor
earth so green,
For all my blood danced in me, and I
knew
That I should light upon the Holy
Grail.

"Thereafter, the dark warning of
our King,
That most of us would follow wander-
ing fires,
Came like a driving gloom across my
mind.
Then every evil word I had spoken
once,
And every evil thought I had thought
of old,
And every evil deed I ever did,
Awoke and cried, 'This Quest is not
for thee.'
And lifting up mine eyes, I found my-
self
Alone, and in a land of sand and
thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death;
And I, too, cried, 'This Quest is not
for thee.'

"And on I rode, and when I thought
my thirst
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and
then a brook,
With one sharp rapid, where the crisp-
ing white
Play'd ever back upon the sloping
wave,
And took both ear and eye; and o'er
the brook
Were apple-trees, and apples by the
brook
Fallen, and on the lawns. 'I will rest
here,'
I said, 'I am not worthy of the Quest;'
• But even while I drank the brook, and
ate
The goodly apples, all these things at
once

Fell into dust, and I was left alone,
And thirsting, in a land of sand and
thorns.

"And then behold a woman at a
door
Spinning; and fair the house whereby
she sat,
And kind the woman's eyes and inno-
cent,
And all her bearing gracious; and she
rose
Opening her arms to meet me, as who
should say,
'Rest here;' but when I touch'd her,
lo! she, too,
Fell into dust and nothing, and the
house
Became no better than a broken shed.
And in it a dead babe; and also this
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

"And on I rode, and greater was
my thirst.
Then flash'd a yellow gleam across
the world,
And where it smote the plowshare in
the field,
The plowman left his plowing, and
fell down
Before it; where it glitter'd on her
pail,
The milkmaid left her milking, and
fell down
Before it, and I knew not why, but
thought
'The sun is rising,' tho' the sun had
risen.
Then was I ware of one that on me
moved
In golden armor with a crown of gold
About a casque all jewels; and his
horse
In golden armor jewell'd everywhere:
And on the splendor came, flashing
me blind;
And seem'd to me the Lord of all the
world,
Being so huge. But when I thought
he meant
To crush me, moving on me, lo! he,
too,
Open'd his arms to embrace me as he
came,
And up I went and touch'd him, and
he, too,
Fell into dust, and I was left alone
And wearying in a land of sand and
thorns.

"And I rode on and found a mighty
hill,
And on the top, a city wall'd: the
spires
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into
heaven.

And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd;
 and these
 Cried to me climbing, 'Welcome, Percivale!
 Thou mightiest and thou purest
 among men!'
 And glad was I and clomb, but found
 at top
 No man, nor any voice. And thence
 I past
 Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw
 That man had once dwelt there; but
 there I found
 Only one man of an exceeding age.
 'Where is that goodly company,' said I,
 'That so cried out upon me?' and he
 had
 Scarce any voice to answer, and yet
 gasp'd,
 'Whence and what art thou?' and
 even as he spoke
 Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I
 Was left alone once more, and cried
 in grief,
 'Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself
 And touch it, it will crumble into
 dust.'

"And thence I dropt into a lowly
 vale,
 Low as the hill was high, and where
 the vale
 Was lowest, found a chapel, and
 thereby
 A holy hermit in a hermitage,
 To whom I told my phantoms, and he
 said:

"O son, thou hast not true humility,
 The highest virtue, mother of them all;
 For when the Lord of all things made
 Himself
 Naked of glory for His mortal change,
 "Take thou my robe," she said, "for
 all is thine,"
 And all her form shone forth with
 sudden light
 So that the angels were amazed, and
 she
 Follow'd Him down, and like a flying
 star
 Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the
 east;
 But her thou hast not known: for
 what is this
 Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and
 thy sins?
 Thou hast not lost thyself to save
 thyself
 As Galahad.' When the hermit made
 an end,
 In silver armor suddenly Galahad
 shone
 Before us, and against the chapel door
 Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt
 in prayer.

And there the hermit slaked my burn-
 ing thirst,
 And at the sacring of the mass I saw
 The holy elements alone; but he,
 'Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw
 the Grail,
 The Holy Grail, descend upon the
 shrine:
 I saw the fiery face as of a child
 That smote itself into the bread, and
 went;
 And hither am I come; and never yet
 Hath what thy sister taught me first
 to see,
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,
 nor come
 Cover'd, but moving with me night
 and day,
 Fainter by day, but always in the night
 Blood-red, and sliding down the black-
 en'd marsh
 Blood-red, and on the naked mountain
 top
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere
 below
 Blood-red. And in the strength of
 this I rode,
 Shattering all evil customs every-
 where,
 And past thro' Pagan realms, and
 made them mine,
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and
 bore them down,
 And broke thro' all, and in the strength
 of this
 Come victor. But my time is hard at
 hand,
 And hence I go; and one will crown
 me king
 Far in the spiritual city; and come
 thou, too,
 For thou shalt see the vision when I
 go.'

"While thus he spake, his eye,
 dwelling on mine,
 Drew me, with power upon me, till I
 grew
 One with him, to believe as he be-
 lieved.
 Then, when the day began to wane,
 we went.

"There rose a hill that none but
 man could climb,
 Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-
 courses —
 Storm at the top, and when we gain'd
 it, storm
 Round us and death; for every mo-
 ment glanced
 His silver arms and gloom'd: so quick
 and thick
 The lightnings here and there to left
 and right

Struck, till the dry old trunks about
us, dead,
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of
death,
Sprang into fire: and at the base we
found
On either hand, as far as eye could
see,
A great black swamp and of an evil
smell,
Part black, part whiten'd with the
bones of men,
Not to be crost, save that some ancient
king
Had built a way, where, link'd with
many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the great
Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge
by bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he
crost
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I
yearn'd
To follow; and thrice above him all
the heavens
Open'd and blazed with thunder such
as seem'd
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and
first
At once I saw him far on the great
Sea,
In silver-shining armor starry-clear;
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel
hung
Clothed in white samite or a luminous
cloud.
And with exceeding swiftiness ran the
boat,
If boat it were — I saw not whence it
came.
And when the heavens open'd and
blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star —
And had he set the sail, or had the
boat
Become a living creature clad with
wings?
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel
hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been
withdrawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed
again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight
beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her
spires
And gateways in a glory like one
pearl —
No larger, tho' the goal of all the
saints —
Strike from the sea; and from the
star there shot

A rose-red sparkle to the city, and
there
Dwelt, and I know it was the Holy
Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again
shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drown-
ing the deep.
And how my feet recrost the death-
ful ridge
No memory in me lives; but that I
touch'd
The chapel-doors at dawn I know;
and thence
Taking my war-horse from the holy
man,
Glad that no phantom vexed me more,
return'd
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's
wars."

"O brother," ask'd Ambrosius, —
"for in sooth
These ancient books — and they would
win thee — teen,
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to
these,
Not all unlike; which oftentime I read,
Who read but on my breviary with
ease,
Till my head swims; and then go forth
and pass
Down to the little thorpe that lies so
close,
And almost plaster'd like a martin's
nest
To these old walls — and mingle with
our folk;
And knowing every honest face of
theirs
As well as ever shepherd knew his
sheep,
And every homely secret in their
hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old
wives,
And ills and aches, and teething, and
lyings-in,
And mirthful sayings, children of the
place,
That have no meaning half a league
away:
Or lulling random squabbles when
they rise,
Chafferings and chatterings at the
market-cross,
Rejoice, small man, in this small world
of mine,
Yea, even in their hens and in their
eggs —
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,
Came ye on none but phantoms in
your quest,
No man, no woman?"

Then Sir Percivale:
 "All men, to one so bound by such a
 vow,
 And women were as phantoms. O,
 my brother,
 Why wilt thou shame me to confess
 to thee
 How far I falter'd from my quest and
 vow?
 For after I had lain so many nights,
 A bedmate of the snail and eft and
 snake,
 In grass and burdock, I was changed
 to wan
 And meagre, and the vision had not
 come;
 And then I chanced upon a goodly
 town
 With one great dwelling in the middle
 of it;
 Thither I made, and there was I dis-
 arm'd
 By maidens each as fair as any flower:
 But when they led me into hall, be-
 hold,
 The Princess of that castle was the
 one,
 Brother, and that one only, who had
 ever
 Made my heart leap; for when I
 moved of old
 A slender page about her father's hall,
 And she a slender maiden, all my
 heart
 Went after her with longing: yet we
 twain
 Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a
 vow.
 And now I came upon her once
 again,
 And one had wedded her, and he was
 dead,
 And all his land and wealth and state
 were hers.
 And while I tarried, every day she
 set
 A banquet richer than the day before
 By me; for all her longing and her
 will
 Was toward me as of old; till one
 fair morn,
 I walking to and fro beside a stream
 That flash'd across her orchard under-
 neath
 Her castle-walls, she stole upon my
 walk,
 And calling me the greatest of all
 knights,
 Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the
 first time,
 And gave herself and all her wealth
 to me.
 Then I remember'd Arthur's warning
 word,
 That most of us would follow wan-
 dering fires,

And the Quest faded in my heart.
 Anon,
 The heads of all her people drew to
 me,
 With supplication both of knees and
 tongue:
 'We have heard of thee: thou art
 our greatest knight,
 Our Lady says it, and we well believe:
 Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
 And thou shalt be as Arthur in our
 land.'
 O me, my brother! but one night my
 vow
 Burnt me within, so that I rose and
 fled,
 But wail'd and wept, and hated mine
 own self,
 And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but
 her;
 Then after I was join'd with Galahad
 Cared not for her, nor anything upon
 earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men,
 when yule is cold,
 Must be content to sit by little fires.
 And this am I, so that ye care for me
 Ever so little; yea, and blest be
 Heaven
 That brought thee here to this poor
 house of ours
 Where all the brethren are so hard,
 to warm
 My cold heart with a friend: but O
 the pity
 To find thine own first love once
 more—to hold,
 Hold her a wealthy bride within thine
 arms,
 Or all but hold, and then—cast her
 aside,
 Foregoing all her sweetness, like a
 weed.
 For we that want the warmth of
 double life,
 We that are plagued with dreams of
 something sweet
 Beyond all sweetness in a life so
 rich,—
 Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-
 wise,
 Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
 But live like an old badger in his
 earth,
 With earth about him everywhere,
 despite
 All fast and penance. Saw ye none
 beside,
 None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale:
 "One night my pathway swerving
 east, I saw
 The pelican on the casque of our Sir
 Bors

All in the middle of the rising moon:
 And toward him spurr'd, and hail'd
 him, and he me,
 And each made joy of either; then
 he ask'd,
 'Where is he? hast thou seen him —
 Lancelot? — Once,'
 Said good Sir Bors, 'he dash'd across
 me — mad,
 And maddening what he rode: and
 when I cried,
 "Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
 So holy," Lancelot shouted, "Stay
 me not!
 I have been the sluggard, and I ride
 apace,
 For now there is a lion in the way."
 So vanish'd.'

 "Then Sir Bors had ridden on
 Softly, and sorrowing for our Lan-
 celot,
 Because his former madness, once the
 talk
 And scandal of our table, had re-
 turn'd;
 For Lancelot's kith and kin so wor-
 ship him
 That ill to him is ill to them; to Bors
 Beyond the rest: he well had been
 content
 Not to have seen, so Lancelot might
 have seen,
 The Holy Cup of healing; and, indeed,
 Being so clouded with his grief and
 love,
 Small heart was his after the Holy
 Quest:
 If God would send the vision, well:
 if not,
 The Quest and he were in the hands
 of Heaven.

 "And then, with small adventure
 met, Sir Bors
 Rode to the loneliest tract of all the
 realm,
 And found a people there among
 their crags,
 Our race and blood, a remnant that
 were left
 Paynim amid their circles, and the
 stones
 They pitch up straight to heaven:
 and their wise men
 Were strong in that old magic which
 can trace
 The wandering of the stars, and
 scoff'd at him
 And this high Quest as at a simple
 thing:
 Told him he follow'd — almost Ar-
 thur's words —
 A mocking fire: 'what other fire than
 he,

Whereby the blood beats, and the
 'blossom blows,
 And the sea rolls, and all the world is
 warm'd?'

And when his answer chafed them,
 the rough crowd,
 Hearing he had a difference with
 their priests,
 Seized him, and bound and plunged
 him into a cell
 Of great piled stones; and lying
 bounden there
 In darkness thro' innumerable
 hours
 He heard the hollow-ringing heavens
 sweep
 Over him till by miracle — what
 else? —
 Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt
 and fell,
 Such as no wind could move: and
 thro' the gap
 Glimmer'd the streaming scud: then
 came a night
 Still as the day was loud; and thro'
 the gap
 The seven clear stars of Arthur's
 Table Round —
 For, brother, so one night, because
 they roll
 Thro' such a round in heaven, we
 named the stars,
 Rejoicing in ourselves and in our
 King —
 And these, like bright eyes of familiar
 friends,
 In on him shone: 'And then to me,
 to me,'
 Said good Sir Bors, 'beyond all hopes
 of mine,
 Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for
 myself —
 Across the seven clear stars — O
 grace to me —
 In color like the fingers of a hand
 Before a burning taper, the sweet
 Grail
 Glided and past, and close upon it peal'd
 A sharp quick thunder.' Afterwards,
 a maid,
 Who kept our holy faith among her
 kin
 In secret, entering, loosed and let him
 go."

 To whom the monk: "And I re-
 member now
 That pelican on the casque: Sir Bors
 it was
 Who spake so low and sadly at our
 board;
 And mighty reverent at our grace
 was he:
 A square-set man and honest; and his
 eyes,

An out-door sign of all the warmth
 within,
 Smiled with his lips — a smile beneath
 a cloud,
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny
 one :
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else ! But
 when ye reach'd
 The city, found ye all your knights
 return'd,
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's proph-
 ecy,
 Tell me, and what said each, and
 what the King ? ”

Then answer'd Percivale : “ And
 that can I,
 Brother, and truly ; since the living
 words
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our
 King
 Pass not from door to door and out
 again,
 But sit within the house. O, when we
 reach'd
 The city, our horses stumbling as
 they trode
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cock-
 atrices,
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left
 the stones
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us
 to the hall.

“ And there sat Arthur on the daïs-
 throne,
 And those that had gone out upon the
 Quest,
 Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of
 them,
 And those that had not, stood before
 the King,
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade
 me hail,
 Saying, ‘ A welfare in thine eye re-
 proves
 Our fear of some disastrous chance
 for thee
 On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding
 ford.
 So fierce a gale made havoc here of
 late
 Among the strange devices of our
 kings ;
 Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall
 of ours,
 And from the statue Merlin moulded
 for us
 Half-wrench'd a golden wing ; but
 now — the Quest,
 This vision — hast thou seen the Holy
 Cup,
 That Joseph brought of old to Glas-
 tonbury ? ”

“ So when I told him all thyself
 hast heard,
 Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt re-
 solve
 To pass away into the quiet life,
 He answer'd not, but, sharply turn-
 ing, ask'd
 Of Gawain, ‘ Gawain, was this Quest
 for thee ? ’
 “ ‘ Nay, lord,’ said Gawain, ‘ not for
 such as I.
 Therefore I communed with a saintly
 man,
 Who made me sure the Quest was not
 for me ;
 For I was much awearied of the
 Quest :
 But found a silk pavilion in a field,
 And merry maidens in it ; and then
 this gale
 Tore my pavilion from the tenting-
 pin,
 And blew my merry maidens all
 about
 With all discomfort ; yea, and but for
 this,
 My twelvemonth and a day were
 pleasant to me.’ ”

“ He ceased ; and Arthur turn'd to
 whom at first
 He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,
 push'd
 Athwart the throng to Lancelot,
 caught his hand,
 Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,
 stood,
 Until the King espied him, saying to
 him,
 ‘ Hail, Bors ! if ever loyal man and
 true
 Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail ; ’
 and Bors,
 ‘ Ask me not, for I may not speak of
 it :
 I saw it ; ’ and the tears were in his
 eyes.

“ Then there remain'd but Lance-
 lot, for the rest
 Spake but of sundry perils in the
 storm ;
 Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy
 Writ,
 Our Arthur kept his best until the
 last ;
 ‘ Thou, too, my Lancelot,’ ask'd the
 King, ‘ my friend,
 Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd
 for thee ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Our mightiest ! ’ answer'd Lance-
 lot, with a groan ;
 ‘ O King ! ’ — and when he paused,
 methought I spied

A dying fire of madness in his eyes —
 'O King, my friend, if friend of thine
 I be,
 Happier are those that welter in their
 sin,
 Swine in the mud; that cannot see for
 slime,
 Slime of the ditch: but in me lived a
 sin
 So strange, of such a kind, that all of
 pure,
 Noble, and knightly in me twined
 and clung
 Round that one sin, until the whole-
 some flower
 And poisonous grew together, each as
 each,
 Not to be pluck'd asunder; and when
 thy knights
 Swore, I swore with them only in the
 hope
 That could I touch or see the Holy
 Grail
 They might be pluck'd asunder. Then
 I spake
 To one most holy saint, who wept and
 said,
 That save they could be pluck'd
 asunder, all
 My quest were but in vain; to whom
 I vow'd
 That I would work according as he
 will'd.
 And forth I went, and while I yearn'd
 and strove
 To tear the twain asunder in my
 heart,
 My madness came upon me as of old,
 And whipt me into waste fields far
 away;
 There was I beaten down by little
 men,
 Mean knights, to whom the moving
 of my sword
 And shadow of my spear had been
 enow
 To scare them from me once; and
 then I came
 All in my folly to the naked shore,
 Wide flats, where nothing but coarse
 grasses grew;
 But such a blast, my King, began to
 blow,
 So loud a blast along the shore and
 sea,
 Ye could not hear the waters for the
 blast,
 Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all
 the sea
 Drove like a cataract, and all the sand
 Swept like a river, and the clouded
 heavens
 Were shaken with the motion and the
 sound.
 And blackening in the sea-foam
 sway'd a boat,

Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a
 chain;
 And in my madness to myself I said,
 "I will embark and I will lose myself,
 And in the great sea wash away my
 sin."
 I burst the chain, I sprang into the
 boat.
 Seven days I drove along the dreary
 deep,
 And with me drove the moon and all
 the stars;
 And the wind fell, and on the seventh
 night
 I heard the shingle grinding in the
 surge,
 And felt the boat shock earth, and
 looking up,
 Behold, the enchanted towers of Car-
 bonek,
 A castle like a rock upon a rock,
 With chasm-like portals open to the
 sea,
 And steps that met the breaker! there
 was none
 Stood near it but a lion on each side
 That kept the entry, and the moon
 was full.
 Then from the boat I leapt, and up
 the stairs.
 There drew my sword. With sudden-
 flaring manes
 Those two great beasts rose upright
 like a man,
 Each gript a shoulder, and I stood
 between;
 And, when I would have smitten
 them, heard a voice,
 "Doubt not, go forward; if thou
 doubt, the beasts
 Will tear thee piecemeal." Then with
 violence
 The sword was dash'd from out my
 hand, and fell.
 And up into the sounding hall I past;
 But nothing in the sounding hall I
 saw,
 No bench nor table, painting on the
 wall
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded
 moon
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
 But always in the quiet house I heard,
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost
 tower
 To the eastward: up I climb'd a thou-
 sand steps
 With pain: as in a dream I seem'd to
 climb
 For ever: at the last I reach'd a door,
 A light was in the crannies, and I
 heard,
 "Glory and joy and honor to our
 Lord
 And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."

Then in my madness I essay'd the
 door;
 It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a
 heat
 As from a seventimes-heated furnace,
 I,
 Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I
 was,
 With such a fierceness that I swoon'd
 away —
 O, yet methought I saw the Holy
 Grail,
 All pall'd in crimson samite, and
 around
 Great angels, awful shapes, and wings
 and eyes.
 And but for all my madness and my
 sin,
 And then my swooning, I had sworn
 I saw
 That which I saw; but what I saw
 was veil'd
 And cover'd; and this Quest was not
 for me.'

"So speaking, and here ceasing,
 Lancelot left
 The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain
 — nay,
 Brother, I need not tell thee foolish
 words, —
 A reckless and irreverent knight was
 he,
 Now bolden'd by the silence of his
 King, —
 Well, I tell thee: 'O King, my
 liege,' he said,
 'Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of
 thine?
 When have I stinted stroke in fough-
 ten field?
 But as for thine, my good friend
 Percivale,
 Thy holy nun and thou have driven
 men mad,
 Yea, made our mightiest madder than
 our least.
 But by mine eyes and by mine ears I
 swear,
 I will be deafer than the blue-eyed
 cat,
 And thrice as blind as any noonday
 owl,
 To holy virgins in their ecstasies,
 Henceforward."

"'Deafer,' said the blameless
 King,
 'Gawain, and blinder unto holy
 things
 Hope not to make thyself by idle
 vows,
 Being too blind to have desire to see.
 But if indeed there came a sign from
 heaven,

Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Per-
 civale,
 For these have seen according to
 their sight.
 For every fiery prophet in old times,
 And all the sacred madness of the
 bard,
 When God make music thro' them,
 could but speak
 His music by the framework and the
 chord;
 And as ye saw it ye have spoken
 truth.

"'Nay — but thou errest, Lancelot:
 never yet
 Could all of true and noble in knight
 and man
 Twine round one sin, whatever it
 might be,
 With such a closeness, but apart there
 grew,
 Save that he were the swine thou
 spakest of,
 Some root of knighthood and pure
 nobleness;
 Whereto see thou, that it may bear
 its flower.

"'And spake I not too truly, O my
 knights?
 Was I too dark a prophet when I said
 To those who went upon the Holy
 Quest,
 That most of them would follow
 wandering fires,
 Lost in the quagmire? — lost to me
 and gone,
 And left me gazing at a barren board,
 And a lean Order — scarce return'd a
 tithe —
 And out of those to whom the vision
 came
 My greatest hardly will believe he
 saw;
 Another hath beheld it afar off,
 And leaving human wrongs to right
 themselves,
 Cares but to pass into the silent life.
 And one hath had the vision face to
 face,
 And now his chair desires him here
 in vain,
 However they may crown him other-
 where.

"'And some among you held, that
 if the King
 Had seen the sight he would have
 sworn the vow:
 Not easily, seeing that the King must
 guard
 That which he rules, and is but as the
 hind
 To whom a space of land is given to
 plow.

Who may not wander from the allotted field
 Before his work be done; but, being done,
 Let visions of the night or of the day
 Come, as they will; and many a time they come,
 Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
 This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
 This air that smites his forehead is not air
 But vision — yea, his very hand and foot —
 In moments when he feels he cannot die,
 And knows himself no vision to himself,
 Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
 Who rose again: ye have seen what ye have seen.'

"So spake the King: I knew not all he meant."

PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill the gap
 Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat
 In the hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
 Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these a youth,
 Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields
 Past, and the sunshine came along with him.

"Make me thy knight, because I know, Sir King,
 All that belongs to knighthood, and I love."
 Such was his cry: for having heard the King
 Had let proclaim a tournament — the prize
 A golden circlet and a knightly sword,
 Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
 The golden circlet, for himself the sword:
 And there were those who knew him near the King,
 And promised for him: and Arthur made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the isles —
 But lately come to his inheritance,

And lord of many a barren isle was he —
 Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
 Across the forest call'd of Dean, to find
 Caerleon and the King, had felt the sun
 Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and reel'd
 Almost to falling from his horse; but saw
 Near him a mound of even-sloping side,
 Whereon a hundred stately beeches grew,
 And here and there great hollies under them;
 But for a mile all round was open space,
 And fern and heath: and slowly Pelleas drew
 To that dim day, then binding his good horse
 To a tree, cast himself down; and as he lay
 At random looking over the brown earth
 Thro' that green-glooming twilight of the grove,
 It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern without
 Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,
 So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it.
 Then o'er it crost the dimness of a cloud
 Floating, and once the shadow of a bird
 Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes closed.
 And since he loved all maidens, but no maid
 In special, half-awake he whisper'd,
 "Where?
 O where? I love thee, tho' I know thee not.
 For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere,
 And I will make thee with my spear and sword
 As famous — O my Queen, my Guinevere,
 For I will be thine Arthur when we meet."

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of talk
 And laughter at the limit of the wood,
 And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he saw,
 Strange as to some old prophet might have seem'd
 A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
 Damsels in divers colors like the cloud
 Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them

On horses, and the horses richly trapt
Breast-high in that bright line of
bracken stood :

And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and
one that,
Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to
the light.
There she that seem'd the chief among
them said,
"In happy time behold our pilot-star!
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we
ride,
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the
knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our
way :
To right ? to left ? straight forward ?
back again ?
Which ? tell us quickly."

And Pelleas gazing thought,
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful ?"
For large her violet eyes look'd, and
her bloom
A rosy dawn kindled in stainless
heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in
womanhood;
And slender was her hand and small
her shape;
And but for those large eyes, the haunts
of scorn,
She might have seem'd a toy to trifle
with,
And pass and care no more. But
while he gazed
The beauty of her flesh abash'd the
boy,
As tho' it were the beauty of her soul :
For as the base man, judging of the
good,
Puts his own baseness in him by
default
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
All the young beauty of his own soul
to hers,
Believing her; and when she spake
to him,
Stammer'd, and could not make her a
reply.
For out of the waste islands had he
come,
Where saving his own sisters he had
known
Scarce any but the women of his isles,
Rough wives, that laugh'd and
scream'd against the gulls,
Makers of nets, and living from the
sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the
lady round

And look'd upon her people; and as
when
A stone is flung into some sleeping
tarn,
The circle widens till it lip the marge,
Spread the slow smile thro' all her
company.
Three knights were thereamong; and
they too smiled,
Scorning him; for the lady was
Ettarre,
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, "O wild and of the
woods,
Knowest thou not the fashion of our
speech ?
Or have the Heavens but given thee
a fair face,
Lacking a tongue ?"

"O damsel," answer'd he,
"I woke from dreams; and coming
out of gloom
Was dazzled by the sudden light, and
crave
Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon ? I
Go likewise: shall I lead you to the
King ?"

"Lead then," she said; and thro'
the woods they went.
And while they rode, the meaning in
his eyes,
His tenderness of manner, and chaste
awe,
His broken utterances and bashful-
ness,
Were all a burthen to her, and in her
heart
She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a
fool,
Raw, yet so stale!" But since her
mind was bent
On hearing, after trumpet blown, her
name
And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the
lists
Cried — and beholding him so strong,
she thought
That peradventure he will fight for
me,
And win the circlet: therefore flatter'd
him,
Being so gracious, that he wellnigh
deem'd
His wish by hers was echo'd; and her
knights
And all her damsels too were gracious
to him,
For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd
Caerleon, ere they past to lodging,
she,
Taking his hand, "O the strong hand,"
she said,

"See! look at mine! but wilt thou
fight for me,
And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
That I may love thee?"

Then his helpless heart
Leapt, and he cried, "Ay! wilt thou
if I win?"
"Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and
she laugh'd,
And straitly nipt the hand, and flung
it from her;
Then glanced askew at those three
knights of hers,
Till all her ladies laugh'd along with
her.

"O happy world," thought Pelleas,
"all, meseems,
Are happy; I the happiest of them
all."
Nor slept that night for pleasure in
his blood,
And green wood-ways, and eyes among
the leaves;
Then being on the morrow knighted,
sware
To love one only. And as he came
away,
The men who met him rounded on
their heels
And wonder'd after him, because his
face
Shone like the countenance of a priest
of old
Against the flame about a sacrifice
Kindled by fire from heaven: so glad
was he.

Then Arthur made vast banquets,
and strange knights
From the four winds came in: and
each one sat,
Tho' served with choice from air, land,
stream, and sea,
Oft in mid-banquet measuring with
his eyes
His neighbor's make and might: and
Pelleas look'd
Noble among the noble, for he dream'd
His lady loved him, and he knew him-
self
Loved of the King: and him his new-
made knight
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper
moved him more
Than all the ranged reasons of the
world.

Then blush'd and brake the morn-
ing of the jousts,
And this was call'd "The Tournament
of Youth:"
For Arthur, loving his young knight,
withheld

His older and his mightier from the
lists,
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's
love,
According to her promise, and remain
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur
had the jousts
Down in the flat field by the shore of
Usk
Holden: the gilded parapets were
crown'd
With faces, and the great tower fill'd
with eyes
Up to the summit, and the trumpets
blew.
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept
the field
With honor: so by that strong hand
of his
The sword and golden circlet were
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved:
the heat
Of pride and glory fired her face; her
eye
Sparkled; she caught the circlet from
his lance,
And there before the people crown'd
herself:
So for the last time she was gracious
to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space — her
look
Bright for all others, cloudier on her
knight —
Linger'd Ettarre: and seeing Pelleas
droop,
Said Guinevere, "We marvel at thee
much,
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
To him who won thee glory!" And
she said,
"Had ye not held your Lancelot in
your bower,
My Queen, he had not won." Where-
at the Queen,
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and
went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and
herself,
And those three knights all set their
faces home,
Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw
him cried,
"Damsels — and yet I should be
shamed to say it —
I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back
Among yourselves. Would rather
that we had
Some rough old knight who knew the
worldly way,

Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride
 And jest with: take him to you, keep
 him off,
 And pamper him with papmeat, if ye
 will,
 Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,
 Such as the wholesome mothers tell
 their boys.
 Nay, should ye try him with a merry
 one
 To find his mettle, good: and if he fly
 us,
 Small matter! let him." This her
 damsels heard,
 And mindful of her small and cruel
 hand,
 They, closing round him thro' the
 journey home,
 Acted her hest, and always from her
 side
 Restrain'd him with all manner of
 device,
 So that he could not come to speech
 with her.
 And when she gain'd her castle, up-
 sprang the bridge,
 Down rang the grate of iron thro' the
 groove,
 And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies,"
 Pelleas thought,
 "To those who love them, trials of
 our faith.
 Yea, let her prove me to the uttermost,
 For loyal to the uttermost am I."
 So made his moan; and, darkness
 falling, sought
 A priory not far off, there lodged, but
 rose
 With morning every day, and, moist
 or dry,
 Full-arm'd upon his charger all day
 long
 Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to
 him.

And this persistence turn'd her
 scorn to wrath.
 Then calling her three knights, she
 charged them, "Out!
 And drive him from the walls." And
 out they came,
 But Pelleas overthrew them as they
 dash'd
 Against him one by one; and these
 return'd,
 But still he kept his watch beneath
 the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate;
 and once,
 A week beyond, while walking on the
 walls
 With her three knights, she pointed
 downward, "Look,

He haunts me—I cannot breathe—
 besieges me;
 Down! strike him! put my hate into
 your strokes,
 And drive him from my walls." And
 down they went,
 And Pelleas overthrew them one by
 one;
 And from the tower above him cried
 Ettarre,
 "Bind him, and bring him in."

He heard her voice;
 Then let the strong hand, which had
 overthrown
 Her minion-knights, by those he over-
 threw
 Be bounden straight, and so they
 brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,
 the sight
 Of her rich beauty made him at one
 glance
 More bondsman in his heart than in
 his bonds.
 Yet with good cheer he spake, "Be-
 hold me, Lady,
 A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will;
 And if thou keep me in thy donjon
 here
 Content am I so that I see thy face
 But once a day: for I have sworn my
 vows,
 And thou hast given thy promise, and
 I know
 That all these pains are trials of my
 faith,
 And that thyself, when thou hast seen
 me strain'd
 And sifted to the utmost, wilt at length
 Yield me thy love and know me for
 thy knight."

Then she began to rail so bitterly,
 With all her damsels, he was stricken
 mute;
 But when she mock'd his vows and
 the great King,
 Lighted on words: "For pity of thine
 own self,
 Peace, Lady, peace: is he not thine
 and mine?"
 "Thou fool," she said, "I never heard
 his voice
 But long'd to break away. Unbind
 him now,
 And thrust him out of doors; for save
 he be
 Fool to the midmost marrow of his
 bones,
 He will return no more." And those,
 her three,
 Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust him
 from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
 She call'd them, saying, "There he
 watches yet,
 There like a dog before his master's
 door!
 Kick'd, he returns: do ye not hate
 him, ye?
 Ye know yourselves: how can ye bide
 at peace,
 Affronted with his fulsome innocence?
 Are ye but creatures of the board and
 bed,
 No men to strike? Fall on him all at
 once,
 And if ye slay him I reckon not: if ye fail,
 Give ye the slave mine order to be
 bound,
 Bind him as heretofore, and bring him
 in:
 It may be ye shall slay him in his
 bonds."

She spake; and at her will they
 couch'd their spears,
 Three against one: and Gawain pass-
 ing by,
 Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
 Low down beneath the shadow of
 those towers
 A villany, three to one: and thro' his
 heart
 The fire of honor and all noble deeds
 Flash'd, and he call'd, "I strike upon
 thy side —
 The caitiffs!" "Nay," said Pelleas,
 "but forbear;
 He needs no aid who doth his lady's
 will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany
 done,
 Forebore, but in his heat and eagerness
 Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog,
 withheld
 A moment from the vermin that he
 sees
 Before him, shivers, ere he springs
 and kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to
 three;
 And they rose up, and bound, and
 brought him in.
 Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,
 burn'd
 Full on her knights in many an evil
 name
 Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beaten
 hound:
 "Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit
 to touch,
 Far less to bind, your victor, and
 thrust him out,
 And let who will release him from his
 bonds.

And if he comes again" — there she
 brake short;
 And Pelleas answer'd, "Lady, for in-
 deed
 I loved you and I deem'd you beauti-
 ful,
 I cannot brook to see your beauty
 marr'd
 Thro' evil spite: and if ye love me not,
 I cannot bear to dream you so for-
 sworn:
 I had liefer ye were worthy of my
 love,
 Than to be loved again of you — fare-
 well;
 And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my
 love,
 Vex not yourself: ye will not see me
 more."

While thus he spake, she gazed
 upon the man
 Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds,
 and thought,
 "Why have I push'd him from me?
 this man loves,
 If love there be: yet him I loved not.
 Why?
 I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that
 in him
 A something — was it nobler than my-
 self? —
 Seem'd my reproach? He is not of
 my kind.
 He could not love me, did he know me
 well.
 Nay, let him go — and quickly." And
 her knights
 Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden
 out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed
 him from his bonds,
 And flung them o'er the walls; and
 afterward,
 Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's
 rag,
 "Faith of my body," he said, "and
 art thou not —
 Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur
 made
 Knight of his table; yea and he that
 won
 The circlet? wherefore hast thou so
 defamed
 Thy brotherhood in me and all the
 rest,
 As let these caitiffs on thee work their
 will?"

And Pelleas answer'd, "O, their
 wills are hers
 For whom I won the circlet; and
 mine, hers,
 Thus to be bounden, so to see her
 face,

Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now,
 Other than when I found her in the woods;
 And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite,
 And all to flout me, when they bring me in,
 Let me be bounden, I shall see her face;
 Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in scorn,
 "Why, let my lady bind me if she will,
 And let my lady beat me if she will:
 But an she send her delegate to thrall
 These fighting hands of mine — Christ kill me then
 But I will slice him handless by the wrist,
 And let my lady sear the stump for him,
 Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend:
 Come, ye know nothing: here I pledge my troth,
 Yea, by the honor of the Table Round,
 I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
 And tame thy jailing princess to thine hand.
 Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say
 That I have slain thee. She will let me in
 To hear the manner of thy fight and fall;
 Then, when I come within her counsels, then
 From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise
 As provest knight and truest lover, more
 Than any have sung thee living, till she long
 To have thee back in lusty life again,
 Not to be bound, save by white bonds and warm,
 Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse
 And armor: let me go: be comforted:
 Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope
 The third night hence will bring thee news of gold."

Then Pelleas lent his horse and all his arms,
 Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took
 Gawain's, and said, "Betray me not, but help —

Art thou not he whom men call light-of-love?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for women be so light."
 Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
 And raised a bugle hanging from his neck,
 And winded it, and that so musically
 That all the old echoes hidden in the wall
 Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower;
 "Avaunt," they cried, "our lady loves thee not."
 But Gawain lifting up his vizor said,
 "Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
 And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye hate:
 Behold his horse and armor. Open gates,
 And I will make you merry."

And down they ran,
 Her damsels, crying to their lady,
 "Lo!
 Pelleas is dead — he told us — he that hath
 His horse and armor: will ye let him in?
 He slew him! Gawain, Gawain of the court,
 Sir Gawain — there he waits below the wall,
 Blowing his bugle as who should say him nay."

And so, leave given, straight on thro' open door
 Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.
 "Dead, is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay," said he,
 "And oft in dying cried upon your name."
 "Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good knight,
 But never let me bide one hour at peace."
 "Ay," thought Gawain, "and you be fair enow:
 But I to your dead man have given my troth,
 That whom ye loathe, him will I make you love."

So those three days, aimless about the land,
 Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering
 Waited, until the third night brought a moon

With promise of large light on woods
and ways.

Hot was the night and silent; but a
sound
Of Gawain ever coming, and this
lay —
Which Pelleas had heard sung before
the Queen,
And seen her sadden listening — vexed
his heart,
And marr'd his rest — “A worm
within the rose.”

“A rose, but one, none other rose
had I,
A rose, one rose, and this was won-
drous fair,
One rose, a rose that gladden'd earth
and sky,
One rose, my rose, that sweeten'd all
mine air —
I cared not for the thorns; the thorns
were there.

“One rose, a rose to gather by and
by,
One rose, a rose, to gather and to
wear,
No rose but one — what other rose
had I?
One rose, my rose; a rose that will
not die, —
He dies who loves it, — if the worm
be there.”

This tender rhyme, and evermore
the doubt,
“Why lingers Gawain with his golden
news?”
So shook him that he could not rest,
but rode
Ere midnight to her walls, and bound
his horse
Hard by the gates. Wide open were
the gates,
And no watch kept; and in thro'
these he past,
And heard but his own steps, and his
own heart
Beating, for nothing moved but his
own self,
And his own shadow. Then he crost
the court,
And spied not any light in hall or
bower,
But saw the postern portal also wide
Yawning; and up a slope of garden, all
Of roses white and red, and brambles
mixt
And overgrowing them, went on, and
found,
Here too, all hush'd below the mellow
moon,
Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave

Came lightening downward, and so
spilt itself
Among the roses, and was lost again,

Then was he ware of three pavil-
ions rear'd
Above the bushes, gilden-peakt: in one,
Red after revel, droned her lurdane
knights
Slumbering, and their three squires
across their feet:
In one, their malice on the placid lip
Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her
damsels lay:
And in the third, the circlet of the
jousts
Bound on her brow, were Gawain and
Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro'
the leaf
To find a nest and feels a snake, he
drew:
Back, as a coward slinks from what
he fears
To cope with, or a traitor proven, or
hound
Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
Creep with his shadow thro' the court
again,
Fingering at his sword-handle until he
stood
There on the castle-bridge once more,
and thought,
“I will go back, and slay them where
they lie.”

And so went back, and seeing them
yet in sleep
Said, “Ye, that so dishallow the holy
sleep,
Your sleep is death,” and drew the
sword, and thought,
“What! slay a sleeping knight? the
King hath bound
And sworn me to this brotherhood;”
again,
“Alas that ever a knight should be
so false.”
Then turn'd, and so return'd, and
groaning laid
The naked sword athwart their naked
throats,
There left it, and them sleeping; and
she lay,
The circlet of the tourney round her
brows,
And the sword of the tourney across her
throat.

And forth he past, and mounting
on his horse
Stared at her towers that, larger than
themselves
In their own darkness, throng'd into
the moon.

Then crush'd the saddle with his
thighs, and clench'd
His hands, and madden'd with himself
and moan'd:

"Would they have risen against
me in their blood
At the last day? I might have an-
swer'd them
Even before high God. O towers so
strong,
Huge, solid, would that even while I
gaze
The crack of earthquake shivering to
your base
Split you, and Hell burst up your
harlot roofs
Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and
thro' within,
Black as the harlot's heart — hollow
as a skull!
Let the fierce east scream thro' your
eyelet-holes,
And whirl the dust of harlots round
and round
In dung and nettles! hiss, snake — I
saw him there —
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell.
Who yells
Here in the still sweet summer night,
but I —
I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd
her fool?
Fool, beast — he, she, or I? myself
most fool;
Beast too, as lacking human wit —
disgraced,
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love —
Love? — we be all alike: only the
King
Hath made us fools and liars. O
noble vows!
O great and sane and simple race of
brutes
That own no lust because they have
no law!
For why should I have loved her to
my shame?
I loathe her, as I loved her to my
shame.
I never loved her, I but lusted for her —
Away —"

He dash'd the rowel into his
horse,
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro'
the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch
on her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd
herself
To Gawain: "Liar, for thou hast not
slain
This Pelleas! here he stood, and might
have slain

Me and thyself." And he that tells
the tale
Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on
earth,
And only lover; and thro' her love
her life
Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half
the night,
And over hard and soft, striking the
sod
From out the soft, the spark from off
the hard,
Rode till the star above the wakening
sun,
Beside that tower where Percivale was
cowl'd,
Glanced from the rosy forehead of
the dawn.
For so the words were flash'd into his
heart
He knew not whence or wherefore:
"O sweet star,
Pure on the virgin forehead of the
dawn!"
And there he would have wept, but
felt his eyes
Harder and drier than a fountain
bed
In summer: thither came the village
girls
And linger'd talking, and they come
no more
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it
from the heights
Again with living waters in the change
Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his
heart
Seem'd; but so weary were his limbs,
that he,
Gasping, "Of Arthur's hall am I, but
here,
Here! let me rest and die," cast him-
self down,
And gulf'd his griefs in inmost sleep;
so lay,
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain
fired
The hall of Merlin, and the morning
star
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame,
and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some
one nigh,
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,
crying,
"False! and I held thee pure as Guin-
evere."

But Percivale stood near him and
replied
"Am I but false as Guinevere is
pure?"

Or art thou mazed with dreams? or
being one
Of our free-spoken Table hast not
heard
That Lancelot" — there he check'd
himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as
with one
Who gets a wound in battle, and the
sword
That made it plunges thro' the
wound again,
And pricks it deeper: and he shrink
and wail'd,
"Is the Queen false?" and Percivale
was mute.
"Have any of our Round Table held
their vows?"
And Percivale made answer not a
word.
"Is the King true?" "The King!"
said Percivale.
"Why then let men couple at once
with wolves.
What! art thou mad?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on
his horse
And fled: small pity upon his horse
had he,
Or on himself, or any, and when he
met
A cripple, one that held a hand for
alms —
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old
dwarf-elm
That turns its back on the salt blast,
the boy
Paused not, but overrode him, shout-
ing, "False,
And false with Gawain!" and so left
him bruised
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill
and wood
Went ever streaming by him till the
gloom,
That follows on the turning of the
world,
Darken'd the common path: he
twitch'd the reins,
And made his beast that better knew
it, swerve
Now off it and now on; but when he
saw
High up in heaven the hall that Mer-
lin built,
Blackening against the dead-green
stripes of even,
"Black nest of rats," he groan'd, "ye
build too high."

Not long thereafter from the city
gates
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,

Warm with a gracious parting from
the Queen,
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star
And marvelling what it was: on
whom the boy,
Across the silent seeded meadow-
grass
Borne, clash'd: and Lancelot, saying,
"What name hast thou
That ridest here so blindly and so
hard?"
"I have no name," he shouted, "a
scourge am I,
To lash the treasons of the Table
Round."
"Yea, but thy name?" "I have
many names," he cried:
"I am wrath and shame and hate
and evil fame,
And like a poisonous wind I pass to
blast
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and
the Queen."
"First over me," said Lancelot, "shalt
thou pass."
"Fight therefore," yell'd the other,
and either knight
Drew back a space, and when they
closed, at once
The weary steed of Pelleas flounder-
ing flung
His rider, who call'd out from the
dark field,
"Thou art false as Hell: slay me: I
have no sword."
Then Lancelot, "Yea, between thy
lips — and sharp;
But here will I disedge it by thy
death."
"Slay then," he shriek'd, "my will is
to be slain,"
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the
fall'n,
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood,
then spake:
"Rise, weakling; I am Lancelot; say
thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-
horse back
To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief
while
Caught his unbroken limbs from the
dark field,
And follow'd to the city. It chanced
that both
Brake into hall together, worn and
pale.
There with her knights and dames
was Guinevere.
Full wonderingly she gazed on Lance-
lot
So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,
him
Who had not greeted her, but cast
himself

Down on a bench, hard-breathing.
 "Have ye fought?"
 She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my
 Queen," he said.
 "And thou hast overthrown him?"
 "Ay, my Queen."
 Then she, turning to Pelleas, "O
 young knight,
 Hath the great heart of knighthood
 in thee fail'd
 So far thou canst not bide, unfro-
 wardly,
 A fall from him?" Then, for he
 answer'd not,
 "Or hast thou other griefs? If I,
 the Queen,
 May help them, loose thy tongue, and
 let me know."
 But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
 She quail'd; and he, hissing "I have
 no sword,"
 Sprang from the door into the dark.
 The Queen
 Look'd hard upon her lover, he ou-
 her;
 And each foresaw the dolorous day
 to be:
 And all talk died, as in a grove all
 song
 Beneath the shadow of some bird of
 prey;
 Then a long silence came upon the
 hall,
 And Modred thought, "The time is
 hard at hand."

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in
 his mood
 Had made mock-knight of Arthur's
 Table Round,
 At Camelot, high above the yellow-
 ing woods,
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the
 hall.
 And toward him from the hall, with
 harp in hand,
 And from the crown thereof a car-
 canet
 Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
 Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
 Came Tristram, saying, "Why skip
 ye so, Sir Fool?"

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding
 once
 Far down beneath a winding wall of
 rock
 Heard a child wail. A stump of oak
 half dead,
 From roots like some black coil of
 carven snakes,
 Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'
 mid air

Bearing an eagle's nest: and thro'
 the tree
 Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro'
 the wind
 Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag
 and tree
 Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the peril-
 ous nest,
 This ruby necklace thrice around her
 neck,
 And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,
 brought
 A maiden babe; which Arthur pity-
 ing took,
 Then gave it to his Queen to rear:
 the Queen
 But coldly acquiescing, in her white
 arms
 Received, and after loved it tenderly,
 And named it Nestling; so forgot
 herself
 A moment, and her cares; till that
 young life
 Being smitten in mid heaven with
 mortal cold
 Past from her; and in time the carcanet
 Vext her with plaintive memories of
 the child:
 So she, delivering it to Arthur, said
 "Take thou the jewels of this dead
 innocence,
 And make them, an thou wilt, a tour-
 ney-prize."

To whom the King, "Peace to thine
 eagle-borne
 Dead nestling, and this honor after
 death,
 Following thy will! but, O my Queen,
 I muse
 Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or
 zone
 Those diamonds that I rescued from
 the tarn,
 And Lancelot won, methought, for
 thee to wear."

"Would rather you had let them
 fall," she cried,
 "Plunge and be lost — ill-fated as
 they were,
 A bitterness to me! — ye look amazed,
 Not knowing they were lost as soon
 as given —
 Slid from my hands, when I was lean-
 ing out
 Above the river — that unhappy child
 Past in her barge: but rosier luck
 will go
 With these rich jewels, seeing that
 they came
 Not from the skeleton of a brother-
 slayer,
 But the sweet body of a maiden babe.
 Perchance — who knows? — the pur-
 est of thy nights

May win them for the purest of my maids."

She ended, and the cry of a great jousts
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the ways
From Camelot in among the faded fields
To furthest towers; and everywhere the knights
Arm'd for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud morn
Into the hall stagger'd, his visage ribb'd
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his nose
Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one hand off,
And one with shatter'd fingers dangling lame,
A churl, to whom indignantly the King,

"My churl, for whom Christ died, what evil beast
Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face? or fiend?
Man was it who marr'd heaven's image in thee thus?"

Then, spluttering thro' the hedge of splinter'd teeth,
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with blunt stump
Pitch-black'd sawing the air, said the maim'd churl,

"He took them and he drave them to his tower —
Some hold he was a table-knight of thine —
A hundred goodly ones — the Red Knight, he —
Lord, I was tending swine, and the Red Knight
Brake in upon me and drave them to his tower;
And when I call'd upon thy name as one
That doest right by gentle and by churl,
Maim'd me and maul'd, and would outright have slain,
Save that he sware me to a message, saying,
'Tell thou the King and all his liars, that I
Have founded my Round Table in the North,
And whatsoever his own knights have sworn

My knights have sworn the counter to it — and say
My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves — and say
My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess
To be none other; and say his hour is come,
The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."

Then Arthur turned to Kay the seneschal,
"Take thou my churl, and tend him curiously
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be whole.
The heathen — but that ever-climbing wave,
Hurl'd back again so often in empty foam,
Hath lain for years at rest — and renegades,
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion, whom
The wholesome realm is purged of elsewhere,
Friends, thro' your manhood and your féalty, — now
Make their last head like Satan in the North.
My younger knights, new-made, in whom your flower
Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling, which achieved,
The loneliest ways are safe from shore to shore.
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the field;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to mingle with it,
Only to yield my Queen her own again?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it well?"

Thereto Sir Lancelot answer'd, "It is well:
Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to me.
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is well."

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot follow'd him,
 And while they stood without the doors, the King
 Turn'd to him saying, "Is it then so well?
 Or mine the blame that oft I seem as he
 Of whom was written, 'A sound is in his ears'?"
 The foot that loiters, bidden go,— the glance
 That only seems half-loyal to command,—
 A manner somewhat fall'n from reverence—
 Or have I dream'd the bearing of our knights
 Tells of a manhood ever less and lower?
 Or whence the fear lest this my realm, uprear'd,
 Bynoble deeds at one with noble vows,
 From flat confusion and brute violence,
 Reel back into the beast, and be no more?"

He spoke, and taking all his younger knights,
 Down the slope city rode, and sharply turn'd
 North by the gate. In her high bower the Queen,
 Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
 Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not that she sigh'd.
 Then ran across her memory the strange rhyme
 Of bygone Merlin, "Where is he who knows?
 From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

But when the morning of a tournament,
 By these in earnest those in mockery call'd
 The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,
 Round whose sick head all night, like birds of prey,
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd, arose,
 And down a streetway hung with folds of pure
 White samite, and by fountains running wine,
 Where children sat in white with cups of gold,
 Moved to the lists, and there, with slow sad steps
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of their Queen
 White-robed in honor of the stainless child,
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a bank
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of fire.
 He look'd but once, and vail'd his eyes again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a dream
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began:
 And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and shorn plume
 Went down it. Sighing weariedly, as one
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
 When all the goodlier guests are past away,
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the lists.
 He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
 Broken, but spake not; once, a knight cast down
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed
 The dead babe and the follies of the King;
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its hole,
 Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard
 The voice that billow'd round the barriers roar
 An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,
 And armor'd all in forest green, whereon
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
 And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
 With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—late
 From overseas in Brittany return'd,
 And marriage with a princess of that realm,
 Isolt the White—Sir Tristram of the Woods—
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime with pain
 His own against him, and now yearn'd to shake

The burden off his heart in one full shock
 With Tristram ev'n to death: his strong hands gript
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,
 Until he groan'd for wrath — so many of those,
 That ware their ladies' colors on the casque,
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the bounds,
 And there with gibes and flickering mockeries
 Stood, while he mutter'd, "Craven crests! O shame!
 What faith have these in whom they sware to love?
 The glory of our Round Table is no more."

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave, the gems,
 Not speaking other word than "Hast thou won?
 Art thou the purest, brother? See, the hand
 Wherewith thou takest this, is red!" to whom
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's languorous mood,
 Made answer, "Ay, but wherefore toss me this
 Like a dry bone cast to some hungry hound?
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy. Strength of heart
 And might of limb, but mainly use and skill,
 Are winners in this pastime of our King.
 My hand — belike the lance hath dript upon it —
 No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief knight,
 Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,
 Great brother, thou nor I have made the world;
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine."

And Tristram round the gallery made his horse
 Caracole; then bow'd his homage, bluntly saying,
 "Fair damsels, each to him who worships each
 Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
 This day my Queen of Beauty is not here."
 And most of these were mute, some anger'd, one,
 Murmuring, "All courtesy is dead," and one,
 "The glory of our Round Table is no more."

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and mantle clung,
 And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
 Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
 But under her black brows a swarthy one
 Laugh'd shrilly, crying, "Praise the patient saints,
 Our one white day of Innocence hath past,
 Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt. So be it.
 The snowdrop only, flowering thro' the year,
 Would make the world as blank as Winter-tide.
 Come — let us gladden their sad eyes, our Queen's
 And Lancelot's at this night's solemnity
 With all the kindlier colors of the field."

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the feast
 Variously gay: for he that tells the tale
 Liken'd them, saying, as when an hour of cold
 Falls on the mountain in midsummer snows,
 And all the purple slopes of mountain flowers
 Pass under white, till the warm hour returns
 With veer of wind, and all are flowers again;
 So dame and damsel cast the simple white,
 And glowing in all colors, the live grass,
 Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy, glanced
 About the revels, and with mirth so loud
 Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the Queen,
 And wroth at Tristram and the lawless jousts,
 Brake up their sports, then slowly to her bower
 Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow morn,
 High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the hall.
 Then Tristram saying, "Why skip ye so, Sir Fool?"
 Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet replied,
 "Belike for lack of wiser company;

Or being fool, and seeing too much
 wit
 Makes the world rotten, why, belike I
 skip
 To know myself the wisest knight of
 all."
 "Ay, fool," said Tristram, but 'tis
 eating dry
 To dance without a catch, a roundelay
 To dance to." Then he twangled on
 his harp,
 And while he twangled little Dagonet
 stood
 Quiet as any water-sodden log
 Stay'd in the wandering warble of a
 brook;
 But when the twangling ended, skipt
 again;
 And being ask'd, "Why skip ye not,
 Sir Fool?"
 Made answer, "I had liefer twenty
 years
 Skip to the broken music of my brains
 Than any broken music thou canst
 make."
 Then Tristram, waiting for the quip
 to come,
 "Good now, what music have I
 broken, fool?"
 And little Dagonet, skipping, "Arthur,
 the King's;
 For when thou playest that air with
 Queen Isolt,
 Thou makest broken music with thy
 bride,
 Her daintier namesake down in Brit-
 tany —
 And so thou breakest Arthur's music
 too."
 "Save for that broken music in thy
 brains,
 Sir Fool," said Tristram, "I would
 break thy head.
 Fool, I came late, the heathen wars
 were o'er,
 The life had flown, we sware but by
 the shell —
 I am but a fool to reason with a fool —
 Come, thou art crabb'd and sour:
 but lean me down,
 'Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses'
 ears,
 And harken if my music be not true.

"Free love — free field — we love
 but while we may:
 The woods are hush'd, their music is
 no more:
 The leaf is dead, the yearning past
 away:
 New leaf, new life — the days of frost
 are o'er:
 New life, new love, to suit the newer
 day:
 New loves are sweet as those that went
 before:

Free love — free field — we love but
 while we may.'

"Ye might have moved slow-meas-
 ure to my tune,
 Not stood stockstill. I made it in the
 woods,
 And heard it ring as true as tested
 gold."

But Dagonet with one foot poised
 in his hand,
 "Friend, did ye mark that fountain
 yesterday
 Made to run wine? — but this had run
 itself
 All out like a long life to a sour
 end —
 And them that round it sat with gold-
 en cups
 To hand the wine to whosoever came —
 The twelve small damosels white as
 Innocence,
 In honor of poor Innocence the babe,
 Who left the gems which Innocence
 the Queen
 Lent to the King, and Innocence the
 King
 Gave for a prize — and one of those
 white slips
 Handed her cup and piped, the pretty
 one,
 'Drink, drink, Sir Fool,' and there-
 upon I drank,
 Spat — pish — the cup was gold, the
 draught was mud."

And Tristram, "Was it muddier than
 thy gibes?
 Is all the laughter gone dead out of
 thee?
 Not marking how the knighthood
 mock thee, fool —
 'Fear God: honor the King — his
 one true knight —
 Sole follower of the vows' — for here
 be they
 Who knew thee swine enow before I
 came,
 Smuttier than blasted grain: but
 when the King
 Had made thee fool, thy vanity so
 shot up
 It frightened all free fool from out
 thy heart;
 Which left thee less than fool, and less
 than swine,
 A naked aught — yet swine I hold
 thee still,
 For I have flung thee pearls and find
 thee swine:"

And little Dagonet mincing with his
 feet,
 "Knight, an ye fling those rubies
 round my neck

In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast
 some touch
 Of music, since I care not for thy
 pearls.
 Swine? I have wallow'd, I have
 wash'd — the world
 Is flesh and shadow — I have had my
 day.
 The dirty nurse, Experience, in her
 kind
 Hath foul'd me — an I wallow'd, then
 I wash'd —
 I have had my day and my philoso-
 phies —
 And thank the Lord I am King Ar-
 thur's fool.
 Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses,
 rams and geese
 Troop'd round a Paynim harper once,
 who thrumm'd
 On such a wire as musically as thou
 Some such fine song — but never a
 king's fool."

And Tristram, "Then were swine,
 goats, asses, geese
 The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim
 bard
 Had such a mastery of his mystery
 That he could harp his wife up out
 of hell."

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball
 of his foot,
 "And whither harp'st thou thine?
 down! and thyself
 Down! and two more: a helpful harp-
 er thou,
 That harpest downward! Dost thou
 know the star
 We call the harp of Arthur up in
 heaven?"

And Tristram, "Ay, Sir Fool, for
 when our King
 Was victor wellnigh day by day, the
 knights,
 Glorying in each new glory, set his
 name
 High on hills, and in the signs of
 heaven."

And Dagonet answer'd, "Ay, and
 when the land
 Was freed, and the Queen false, ye
 set yourself
 To babble about him, all to show your
 wit —
 And whether he were King by cour-
 tesy,
 Or King by right — and so went harp-
 ing down
 The black king's highway, got so far,
 and grew
 So witty that ye play'd at ducks and
 drakes

With Arthur's vows on the great lake
 of fire.
 Tuwhoo! do ye see it? do ye see the
 star?"

"Nay, fool," said Tristram, "not in
 open day."
 And Dagonet, "Nay, nor will: I see
 it and hear.
 It makes a silent music up in heaven,
 And I, and Arthur and the angels
 hear,
 And then we skip." "Lo, fool," he
 said, "ye talk
 Fool's treason: is the King thy brother
 fool?"
 Then little Dagonet clapt his hands
 and shrill'd,
 "Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of
 fools!
 Conceits himself as God that he can
 make
 Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,
 milk
 From burning spurge, honey from hor-
 net-combs,
 And men from beasts — Long live the
 king of fools!"

And down the city Dagonet danced
 away;
 But thro' the slowly-mellowing ave-
 nues
 And solitary passes of the wood
 Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and
 the west.
 Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
 With ruby-circled neck, but evermore
 Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
 Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
 For all that walk'd, or crept, or
 perch'd, or flew.
 Anon the face, as, when a gust hath
 blown,
 Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
 Of one that in them sees himself, re-
 turn'd;
 But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
 Orev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to
 lawn
 Thro' many a league-long bower he
 rode. At length
 A lodge of intertwisted beechen-
 boughs
 Furze-cramm'd, and bracken-rooft, the
 which himself
 Built for a summer day with Queen
 Isolt
 Against a shower, dark in the golden
 grove
 Appearing, sent his fancy back to
 where
 She lived a moon in that low lodge
 with him:

Till Mark her lord had past, the Cornish King,
 With six or seven, when Tristram was away,
 And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading worse than shame
 Her warrior Tristram, spake not any word,
 But bode his hour, devising wretchedness.

And now that desert lodge to Tristram lookt
 So sweet, that halting, in he past, and sank
 Down on a drift of foliage random blown;
 But could not rest for musing how to smoothe
 And sleek his marriage over to the Queen.
 Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all
 The tonguesters of the court she had not heard.
 But then what folly had sent him overseas
 After she left him lonely here? a name?
 Was it the name of one in Brittany, Isolt,
 The daughter of the King? "Isolt of the white hands" they call'd her: the sweet name
 Allured him first, and then the maid herself,
 Who served him well with those white hands of hers,
 And loved him well, until himself had thought
 He loved her also, wedded easily, But left her all as easily and return'd.
 The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes
 Had drawn him home — what marvel? then he laid
 His brows upon the drifted leaf and dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brittany
 Between Isolt of Britain and his bride,
 And show'd them both the ruby-chain, and both
 Began to struggle for it, till his Queen
 Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was red.
 Then cried the Breton, "Look, her hand is red!
 These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,
 And melts within her hand — her hand is hot
 With ill desires, but this I gave thee, look,

Is all as cool and white as any flower."
 Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings, and then
 A whimpering of the spirit of the child,
 Because the twain had spoiled her carcanet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a hundred spears
 Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,
 And many a glancing plash and sallowy isle,
 The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty marsh
 Glared on a huge machicolated tower
 That stood with open doors, where-out was roll'd
 A roar of riot, as from men secure
 Amid their marshes, ruffians at their ease
 Among their harlot-brides, an evil song.
 "Lo there," said one of Arthur's youth, for there,
 High on a grim dead tree before the tower,
 A goodly brother of the Table Round
 Swung by the neck: and on the boughs a shield
 Showing a shower of blood in a field noir,
 And there beside a horn, inflamed the knights
 At that dishonor done the gilded spur,
 Till each would clash the shield, and blow the horn.
 But Arthur waved them back. Alone he rode.
 Then at the dry harsh roar of the great horn,
 That sent the face of all the marsh aloft
 An ever upward-rushing storm and cloud
 Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight heard, and all,
 Even to tipmost lance and topmost helm,
 In blood-red armor sallying, howl'd to the King,

"The teeth of Hell flay bare and gnash thee flat! —
 Lo! art thou not that eunuch-hearted King
 Who fain had clipt free manhood from the world —
 The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's curse, and I!
 Slain was the brother of my paramour
 By a knight of thine, and I that heard her whine
 And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,

Sware by the scorpion-worm that
twists in hell,
And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I
fought
And tumbled. Art thou King? —
Look to thy life!"

He ended: Arthur knew the voice;
the face
Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the
name
Went wandering somewhere darkling
in his mind.
And Arthur deign'd not use of word
or sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd
from horse
To strike him, overbalancing his
bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to
the swamp
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching
wave,
Heard in dead night along that table-
shore,
Drops flat, and after the great waters
break
Whitening for half a league, and thin
themselves,
Far over sands marbled with moon
and cloud,
From less and less to nothing; thus
he fell
Head-heavy; then the knights, who
watch'd him, roar'd
And shouted and leapt down upon the
fall'n;
There trampled out his face from
being known,
And sank his head in mire, and slimed
themselves:
Nor heard the King for their own
cries, but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right
and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces,
hurl'd
The tables over and the wines, and
slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-
yells,
And all the pavement stream'd with
massacre:
Then, yell with yell echoing, they
fired the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like
the live North,
Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and
Alcor,
Made all above it, and a hundred
meres
About it, as the water Moab
saw
Come round by the East, and out be-
yond them flush'd

The long low dune, and lazy-plunging
sea.

So all the ways were safe from
shore to shore,
But in the heart of Arthur pain was
lord.

Then, out of Tristram waking, the
red dream
Fled with a shout, and that low lodge
return'd,
Mid-forest, and the wind among the
boughs.
He whistled his good warhorse left to
graze
Among the forest greens, vaulted
upon him,
And rode beneath an ever-showering
leaf,
Till one lone woman, weeping near a
cross,
Stay'd him. "Why weep ye?"
"Lord," she said, "my man
Hath left me or is dead;" whereon he
thought —
"What, if she hate me now? I
would not this.
"What, if she loves me still? I
would not that.
I know not what I would" — but said
to her,
"Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate
return,
He find thy favor changed and love
thee not" —
Then pressing day by day thro'
Lyonnesse
Last in a rocky hollow, belling, heard
The hounds of Mark, and felt the
goodly hounds
Yelp at his heart, but turning, past
and gain'd
Tintagil, half in sea, and high on
land,
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
A low sea-sunset glorying round her
hair
And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the
Queen.
And when she heard the feet of Tris-
tram grind
The spiring stone that scaled about
her tower,
Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,
and there
Belted his body with her white em-
brace,
Crying aloud, "Not Mark — not
Mark, my soul!
The footstep flutter'd me at first: not
he:
Catlike thro' his own castle steals my
Mark,

But warrior-wise thou stridest thro'
his halls
Who hates thee, as I him—ev'n to
the death.
My soul, I felt my hatred for my
Mark
Quickened within me, and knew that
thou wert nigh."
To whom Sir Tristram smiling, "I am
here.
Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not
thine."

And drawing somewhat backward
she replied,
"Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n
his own,
But save for dread of thee had beaten
me,
Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me
somehow—Mark?
What rights are his that dare not
strike for them?
Not lift a hand—not, tho' he found
me thus!
But hearken! have ye met him?
hence he went
To-day for three days' hunting—as
he said—
And so returns belike within an hour.
Mark's way, my soul!—but eat not
thou with Mark,
Because he hates thee even more than
fears;
Nor drink: and when thou passest
any wood
Close vistor, lest an arrow from the
bush
Should leave me all alone with Mark
and hell.
My God, the measure of my hate for
Mark
Is as the measure of my love for
thee."

So, pluck'd one way by hate and
one by love,
Drain'd of her force, again she sat,
and spake
To Tristram, as he knelt before her,
saying,
"O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
Harper, and thou hast been a rover
too,
For, ere I mated with my shambling
king,
Ye twain had fallen out about the
bride
Of one—his name is out of me—the
prize,
If prize she were—(what marvel—
she could see)—
Thine, friend; and ever since my
craven seeks
To wreck thee villanously: but, O
Sir Knight,

What dame or damsel have ye kneel'd
to last?"

And Tristram, "Last to my Queen
Paramount,
Here now to my Queen Paramount of
love
And loveliness—ay, lovelier than
when first
Her light feet fell on our rough Ly-
onnesse,
Sailing from Ireland."

Softly laugh'd Isolt;
"Flatter me not, for hath not our great
Queen
My dole of beauty trebled?" and he
said,
"Her beauty is her beauty, and thine
thine,
And thine is more to me—soft, gra-
cious, kind—
Save when thy Mark is kindled on
thy lips
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n
to him,
Lancelot; for I have seen him wane now
To make one doubt if ever the great
Queen
Have yielded him her love."

To whom Isolt,
"Ah then, false hunter and false har-
per, thou
Who brakest thro' the scruple of my
bond,
Calling me thy white hind, and say-
ing to me
That Guinevere had sinn'd against
the highest,
And I—misynok'd with such a want
of man—
That I could hardly sin against the
lowest."

He answer'd, "O my soul, be com-
forted!
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-
strings,
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,
Crown'd warrant had we for the
crowning sin
That made us happy: but how ye
greet me—fear
And fault and doubt—no word of
that fond tale—
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet
memories
Of Tristram in that year he was
away."

And, saddening on the sudden, spake
Isolt,
"I had forgotten all in my strong joy
To see thee—yearnings?—ay! for,
hour by hour,

Here in the never-ended afternoon,
 O sweeter than all memories of thee,
 Deeper than any yearnings after thee
 Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-
 smiling seas,
 Watch'd from this tower. Isolt of
 Britain dash'd
 Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
 Would that have chill'd her bride-
 kiss? Wedded her?
 Fought in her father's battles?
 wounded there?
 The King was all fulfill'd with grate-
 fulness,
 And she, my namesake of the hands,
 that heal'd
 Thy hurt and heart with unguent and
 caress —
 Well — can I wish her any huger
 wrong
 Than having known thee? her too
 hast thou left
 To pine and waste in those sweet
 memories.
 O were I not my Mark's, by whom all
 men
 Are noble, I should hate thee more
 than love."

And Tristram, fondling her light
 hands, replied,
 "Grace, Queen, for being loved: she
 loved me well.
 Did I love her? the name at least I
 loved.
 Isolt? — I fought his battles, for Isolt!
 The night was dark; the true star set.
 Isolt!
 The name was ruler of the dark —
 Isolt?
 Care not for her! patient, and prayer-
 ful, meek,
 Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to
 God."

And Isolt answer'd, "Yea, and why
 not I?
 Mine is the larger need, who am not
 meek,
 Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell
 thee now.
 Here one black, mute midsummer
 night I sat,
 Lonely, but musing on thee, wonder-
 ing where,
 Murmuring a light song I had heard
 thee sing,
 And once or twice I spake thy name
 aloud.
 Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near
 me stood,
 In fuming sulphur blue and green, a
 fiend —
 Mark's way to steal behind one in the
 dark —

For there was Mark: 'He has wedded
 her,' he said,
 Not said, but hiss'd it: then this crown
 of towers
 So shook to such a roar of all the
 sky,
 That here in utter dark I swoon'd
 away,
 And woke again in utter dark, and
 cried,
 'I will flee hence and give myself to
 God' —
 And thou wert lying in thy new
 leman's arms."

Then Tristram, ever dallying with
 her hand,
 "May God be with thee, sweet, when
 old and gray,
 And past desire!" a saying that
 anger'd her.
 "May God be with thee, sweet, when
 thou art old,
 And sweet no more to me!' I need
 Him now.
 For when had Lancelot utter'd aught
 so gross
 Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the
 mast?
 The greater man, the greater courtesy.
 Far other was the Tristram, Arthur's
 knight!
 But thou, thro' ever harrying thy
 wild beasts —
 Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a
 lance
 Becomes thee well — art grown wild
 beast thyself.
 How darest thou, if lover, push me
 even
 In fancy from thy side, and set me
 far
 In the gray distance, half a life away,
 Her to be loved no more? Unsay it,
 unswear!
 Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
 Broken with Mark and hate and soli-
 tude,
 Thy marriage and mine own, that I
 should suck
 Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I
 believe.
 Will ye not lie? not swear, as there
 ye kneel,
 And solemnly as when ye sware to
 him,
 The man of men, our King — My
 God, the power
 Was once in vows when men believed
 the King!
 They lied not then, who sware, and
 thro' their vows
 The King prevailing made his realm:
 — I say,
 Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n
 when old,

Gray-hair'd, and past desire, and in despair."

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up and down,
 "Vows! did you keep the vow you made to Mark
 More than I mine? Lied, say ye?
 Nay, but learnt,
 The vow that binds too strictly snaps itself—
 My knighthood taught me this—ay, being snapt—
 We run more counter to the soul thereof
 Than had we never sworn. I swear no more.
 I swore to the great King, and am forsworn.
 For once—ev'n to the height—I honor'd him.
 'Man, is he man at all?' methought, when first
 I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and beheld
 That victor of the Pagan throned in hall—
 His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a brow
 Like hill-snow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
 The golden beard that clothed his lips with light—
 Moreover, that weird legend of his birth,
 With Merlin's mystic babble about his end
 Amazed me; then, his foot was on a stool
 Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me no man,
 But Michaël trampling Satan; so I sware,
 Being amazed: but this went by—
 The vows!
 O ay—the wholesome madness of an hour—
 They served their use, their time; for every knight
 Believed himself a greater than himself,
 And every follower eyed him as a God;
 Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
 Did mightier deeds than elsewhere he had done,
 And so the realm was made; but then their vows—
 First mainly thro' that sullyng of our Queen—
 Began to gall the knighthood, asking whence
 Had Arthur right to bind them to himself?
 Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up from out the deep?

They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh and blood
 Of our old kings; whence then? a doubtful lord
 To bind them by inviolable vows,
 Which flesh and blood perforce would violate:
 For feel this arm of mine—the tide within
 Red with free chase and heather-scented air,
 Pulsing full man; can Arthur make me pure
 As any maiden child? lock up my tongue
 From uttering freely what I freely hear?
 Bind me to one? The wide world laughs at it.
 And worldling of the world am I, and know
 The ptarmigan that whitens ere his hour
 Woos his own end; we are not angels here
 Nor shall be: vows—I am woodman of the woods,
 And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
 Mock them: my soul, we love but while we may;
 And therefore is my love so large for thee,
 Seeing it is not bounded save by love."

Here ending, he moved toward her, and she said,
 "Good: an I turn'd away my love for thee
 To some one thrice as courteous as thyself—
 For courtesy wins women all as well
 As valor may, but he that closes both
 Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller indeed,
 Rosier and comelier, thou—but say I loved
 This knightliest of all knights, and cast thee back
 Thine own small saw, 'We love but while we may,'
 Well then, what answer?"

He that while she spake,
 Mindful of what he brought to adorn her with,
 The jewels, had let one finger lightly touch
 The warm white apple of her throat, replied,
 "Press this a little closer, sweet, until—
 Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd—meat,

Wine, wine — and I will love thee to
the death,
And out beyond into the dream to
come."

So then, when both were brought
to full accord,
She rose, and set before him all he
will'd;
And after these had comforted the
blood
With meats and wines, and satiated
their hearts —
Now talking of their woodland para-
dise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the
founts, the lawns;
Now mocking at the much ungainli-
ness,
And craven shifts, and long crane
legs of Mark —
Then Tristram laughing caught the
harp, and sang:

"Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that
bend the brier!
A star in heaven, a star within the
mere!
Ay, ay, O ay — a star was my desire,
And one was far apart, and one was
near:
Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that bow
the grass!
And one was water and one star was
fire,
And one will ever shine and one will
pass.
Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that move
the mere."

Then in the light's last glimmer
Tristram show'd
And swung the ruby carcanet. She
cried,
"The collar of some Order, which
our King
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my
soul,
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond
thy peers."

"Not so, my Queen," he said, "but
the red fruit
Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-
heaven,
And won by Tristram as a tourney-
prize,
And hither brought by Tristram for
his last
Love-offering and peace-offering unto
thee."

He spoke, he turn'd, then, flinging
round her neck,
Claspt it, and cried "Thine Order, O
my Queen!"

But, while he bow'd to kiss the jew-
ell'd throat,
Out of the dark, just as the lips had
touch'd,
Behind him rose a shadow and a
shriek —
"Mark's way," said Mark, and clove
him thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and
while he climb'd,
All in a death-dumb autumn-drip-
ping gloom,
The stairway to the hall, and look'd
and saw
The great Queen's bower was dark, —
about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he ques-
tion'd it,
"What art thou?" and the voice
about his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, "I am
thy fool,
And I shall never make thee smile
again."

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little
maid,
A novice: one low light betwixt them
burn'd
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all
abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to
the face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause
of flight
Sir Modred; he that like a subtle
beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the
throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance:
for this
He chill'd the popular praises of the
King
With silent smiles of slow disparage-
ment;
And tamper'd with the Lords of the
White Horse,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left;
and sought
To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end; and all
his aims
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for
Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when
 all the court,
 Green-suited, but with plumes that
 mock'd the may,
 Had been, their wont, a-maying and
 return'd,
 That Modred still in green, all ear
 and eye,
 Climb'd to the high top of the garden-
 wall
 To spy some secret scandal if he might,
 And saw the Queen who sat betwixt
 her best
 Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court
 The wildest and the worst; and more
 than this
 He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing
 by
 Spied where he crouch'd, and as the
 gardener's hand
 Picks from the colewort a green cater-
 pillar,
 So from the high wall and the flower-
 ing grove
 Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by
 the heel,
 And cast him as a worm upon the way;
 But when he knew the Prince tho'
 marr'd with dust,
 He, reverencing king's blood in a bad
 man,
 Made such excuses as he might, and
 these
 Full knightly without scorn; for in
 those days
 No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt
 in scorn;
 But, if a man were halt or hunch'd,
 in him
 By those whom God had made full-
 limb'd and tall,
 Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
 And he was answer'd softly by the King
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot
 help
 To raise the Prince, who rising twice
 or thrice
 Full sharply smote his knees, and
 smiled, and went:
 But, ever after, the small violence done
 Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
 As the sharp wind that ruffles all day
 long
 A little bitter pool about a stone
 On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
 This matter to the Queen, at first she
 laugh'd
 Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,
 Then shudder'd, as the village wife
 who cries
 "I shudder, some one steps across my
 grave;"
 Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for
 indeed

She half-foresaw that he, the subtle
 beast,
 Would track her guilt until he found,
 and hers
 Would before evermore a name of scorn.
 Henceforward rarely could she front
 in hall,
 Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy
 face,
 Heart-hiding smile, and gray persis-
 tent eye:
 Henceforward too, the Powers that
 tend the soul,
 To help it from the death that cannot
 die,
 And save it even in extremes, began
 To vex and plague her. Many a time
 for hours,
 Beside the placid breathings of the
 King,
 In the dead night, grim faces came
 and went
 Before her, or a vague spiritual fear —
 Like to some doubtful noise of creak-
 ing doors,
 Heard by the watcher in a haunted
 house,
 That keeps the rust of murder on the
 walls —
 Held her awake: or if she slept, she
 dream'd
 An awful dream; for then she seem'd
 to stand
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,
 And from the sun there swiftly made
 at her
 A ghastly something, and its shadow
 flew
 Before it, till it touch'd her, and she
 turn'd —
 When lo! her own, that broadening
 from her feet,
 And blackening, swallow'd all the
 land, and in it
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she
 woke.
 And all this trouble did not pass but
 grew;
 Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless
 King,
 And trustful courtesies of household
 life,
 Became her bane; and at the last she
 said,
 "O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine
 own land,
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
 And if we meet again, some evil chance
 Will make the smouldering scandal
 break and blaze
 Before the people, and our lord the
 King."
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-
 main'd,
 And still they met and met. Again
 she said,

"O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee hence,"
 And then they were agreed upon a night
 (When the good King should not be there) to meet
 And part for ever. Passion-pale they met
 And greeted: hands in hands, and eye to eye,
 Low on the border of her couch they sat
 Stammering and staring: it was their last hour,
 A madness of farewells. And Modred brought
 His creatures to the basement of the tower
 For testimony; and crying with full voice
 "Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last," aroused
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell
 Stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off,
 And all was still: then she, "The end is come,
 And I am shamed for ever;" and he said,
 "Mine be the shame; mine was the sin; but rise,
 And fly to my strong castle overseas:
 There will I hide thee, till my life shall end,
 There hold thee with my life against the world."
 She answer'd, "Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so?
 Nay, friend, for we have taken our farewells.
 Would God that thou couldst hide me from myself!
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou
 Unwedded: yet rise now, and let us fly,
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,
 And bide my doom." So Lancelot got her horse,
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,
 And then they rode to the divided way,
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping: for he past,
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,
 Back to his land; but she to Almesbury
 Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald,
 And heard the spirits of the waste and weald
 Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan:

And in herself she moan'd "Too late, too late!"
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,
 A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,
 Croak'd, and she thought, "He spies a field of death;
 For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea,
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court,
 Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she spake
 There to the nuns, and said, "Mine enemies
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
 Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask
 Her name to whom ye yield it, till her time
 To tell you:" and her beauty, grace and power,
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared
 To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode
 For many a week, unknown, among the nuns;
 Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,
 But communed only with the little maid,
 Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness
 Which often lured her from herself; but now,
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about
 Came, that Sir Modred had usurp'd the realm,
 And leagued him with the heathen, while the King
 Was waging war on Lancelot: then she thought,
 "With what a hate the people and the King
 Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands
 Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd
 No silence, brake it, uttering "Late! so late!
 What hour, I wonder, now?" and when she drew
 No answer, by and by began to hum
 An air the nuns had taught her; "Late, so late!"
 Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up, and said,

"O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may
weep."

Whereat full willingly sang the little
maid.

"Late, late, so late! and dark the
night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter
still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter
now.

"No light had we: for that we do
repent;
And learning this, the bridegroom
will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter
now.

"No light: so late! and dark
and chill the night!
O let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late: ye cannot enter
now.

"Have we not heard the bridegroom
is so sweet?
O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter
now."

So sang the novice, while full pas-
sionately,
Her head upon her hands, remember-
ing
Her thought when first she came,
wept the sad Queen.
Then said the little novice prattling
to her,

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no
more;
But let my words, the words of one
so small,
Who knowing nothing knows but to
obey,
And if I do not there is penance giv-
en —
Comfort your sorrows; for they do
not flow
From evil done; right sure I am of
that,
Who see your tender grace and state-
liness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord
the King's,
And weighing find them less; for
gone is he
To wage grim war against Sir Lance-
lot there,
Round that strong castle where he
holds the Queen;
And Modred whom he left in charge
of all,

The traitor — Ah sweet lady, the
King's grief

For his own self, and his own Queen,
and realm,

Must needs be thrice as great as any
of ours.

For me, I thank the saints, I am not
great.

For if there ever come a grief to me
I cry my cry in silence, and have done.
None knows it, and my tears have
brought me good:

But even were the griefs of little ones
As great as those of great ones, yet
this grief

Is added to the griefs the great must
bear,

That howsoever much they may desire
Silence, they cannot weep behind a
cloud:

As even here they talk at Almesbury
About the good King and his wicked
Queen,

And were I such a King with such a
Queen,

Well might I wish to veil her wicked-
ness,

But were I such a King, it could not
be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd
the Queen,

"Will the child kill me with her inno-
cent talk?"

But openly she answer'd, "Must not I,
If this false traitor have displaced his
lord,

Grieve with the common grief of all
the realm?"

"Yea," said the maid, "this is all
woman's grief,

That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table
Round

Which good King Arthur founded,
years ago,

With signs and miracles and wonders,
there

At Camelot, ere the coming of the
Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-
self again,

"Will the child kill me with her fool-
ish prate?"

But openly she spake and said to her,
"O little maid, shut in by nunnery
walls,

What canst thou know of Kings and
Tables Round,

Or what of signs and wonders, but the
signs

And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulously,
 "Yea, but I know: the land was full
 of signs
 And wonders ere the coming of the
 Queen.
 So said my father, and himself was
 knight
 Of the great Table — at the founding
 of it;
 And rode thereto from Lyonesse,
 and he said
 That as he rode, an hour or maybe
 twain
 After the sunset, down the coast, he
 heard
 Strange music, and he paused, and
 turning — there,
 All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
 Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
 And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
 He saw them — headland after head-
 land flame
 Far on into the rich heart of the
 west:
 And in the light the white mermaid
 swam,
 And strong man-breasted things stood
 from the sea,
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the
 land,
 To which the little elves of chasm and
 cleft
 Made answer, sounding like a distant
 horn.
 So said my father — yea, and further-
 more,
 Next morning, while he past the dim-
 lit woods,
 Himself beheld three spirits mad with
 joy
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside
 flower,
 That shook beneath them, as the this-
 tle shakes
 When three gray linnets wrangle for
 the seed:
 And still at evenings on before his
 horse
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd
 and broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to Camelot,
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
 Swung round the lighted lantern of
 the hall;
 And in the hall itself was such a feast
 As never man had dream'd; for every
 knight
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for
 served
 By hands unseen; and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated
 things

Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on
 the butts
 While the wine ran: so glad were
 spirits and men
 Before the coming of the sinful
 Queen."

Then spake the Queen and some-
 what bitterly,
 "Were they so glad? ill prophets
 were they all,
 Spirits and men: could none of them
 foresee,
 Not even thy wise father with his signs
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon
 the realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously
 again,
 "Yea, one, a bard; of whom my father
 said,
 Full many a noble war-song had he
 sung,
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's
 fleet,
 Between the steep cliff and the com-
 ing wave;
 And many a mystic lay of life and
 death
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-
 tops,
 When round him bent the spirits of
 the hills
 With all their dewy hair blown back
 like flame:
 So said my father — and that night
 the bard
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and
 sang the King
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd
 at those
 Who call'd him the false son of Gor-
 lois:
 For there was no man knew from
 whence he came:
 But after tempest, when the long
 wave broke
 All down the thundering shores of
 Bude and Bos,
 There came a day as still as heaven,
 and then
 They found a naked child upon the
 sands
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea;
 And that was Arthur; and they fos-
 ter'd him
 Till he by miracle was approven King:
 And that his grave should be a mystery
 From all men, like his birth; and
 could he find
 A woman in her womanhood as great
 As he was in his manhood, then, he
 sang,
 The twain together well might change
 the world.
 But even in the middle of his song

He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would have fall'n,
 But that they stay'd him up; nor would he tell
 His vision; but what doubt that he foresaw
 This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?"

Then thought the Queen, "Lo! they have set her on,
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,
 To play upon me," and bow'd her head nor spake.
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
 Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue
 Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales
 Which my good father told me, check me too
 Nor let me shame my father's memory, one
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,
 And left me; but of others who remain,
 And of the two first-famed for courtesy —
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss —
 But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her,
 "Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
 Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and the King
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and these two
 Were the most nobly-manner'd men of all;
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit
 Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners such fair fruit?"

Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousand-fold
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,
 The most disloyal friend in all the world."

To which a mournful answer made the Queen:
 "O closed about by narrowing nunnery-walls,
 What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,
 Were for one hour less noble than himself,
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of fire,
 And weep for her who drew him to his doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray for both;
 But I should all as soon believe that his,
 Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the King's,
 As I could think, sweet lady, yours would be
 Such as they are, were you the sinful Queen."

So she, like many another babbler, hurt
 Whom she would soothe, and harm'd where she would heal;
 For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat
 Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who cried,
 "Such as thou art be never maiden more
 For ever! thou their tool, set on to plague
 And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
 And traitress." When that storm of anger brake
 From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
 White as her veil, and stood before the Queen
 As tremulously as foam upon the beach
 Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,
 And when the Queen had added "Get thee hence,"
 Fled frightened. Then that other left alone
 Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,
 Saying in herself, "The simple, fearful child



*"They,
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
 Rode under groves that look'd a paradise
 Of Blossom."*

Meant nothing, but my own too-fear-
 ful guilt,
 Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
 But help me, heaven, for surely I
 repent.
 For what is true repentance but in
 thought—
 Not ev'n in inmost thought to think
 again
 The sins that made the past so pleasant
 to us:

And I have sworn never to see him
 more,
 To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this,
 Her memory from old habit of the
 mind
 Went slipping back upon the golden
 days
 In which she saw him first, when
 Lancelot came,

Reputed the best knight and goodliest
man,
Ambassador, to lead her to his lord
Arthur, and led her forth, and far
ahead
Of his and her retinue moving, they,
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on
love
And sport and tilts and pleasure,
(for the time
Was maytime, and as yet no sin was
dream'd,)
Rode under groves that look'd a para-
dise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
That seem'd the heavens upbreking
thro' the earth,
And on from hill to hill, and every day
Beheld at noon in some delicious
dale
The silk pavilions of King Arthur
raised
For brief repast or afternoon repose
By couriers gone before; and on
again,
Till yet once more ere set of sun they
saw
The Dragon of the great Pendragon-
ship,
That crown'd the state pavilion of the
King,
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent
well.

But when the Queen immersed in
such a trance,
And moving thro' the past uncon-
sciously,
Came to that point where first she
saw the King
Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd
to find
Her journey done, glanced at him,
thought him cold,
High, self-contain'd, and passionless,
not like him,
"Not like my Lancelot"—while she
brooded thus
And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
again,
There rode an armed warrior to the
doors.
A murmuring whisper thro' the nun-
nery ran,
Then on a sudden a cry "The King."
She sat
Stiff-stricken, listening; but when
armed feet
Thro' the long gallery from the outer
doors
Rang coming, prone from off her seat
she fell,
And grovell'd with her face against
the floor:
There with her milkwhite arms and
shadowy hair

She made her face a darkness from
the King:
And in the darkness heard his armed
feet
Pause by her; then came silence, then
a voice,
Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but tho'
changed, the King's:

"Liest thou here so low, the child
of one
I honor'd, happy, dead before thy
shame?
Well is it that no child is born of
thee.
The children born of thee are sword
and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of
laws,
The craft of kindred and the Godless
hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern
Sea;
Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
right arm
The mightiest of my knights, abode
with me,
Have everywhere about this land of
Christ
In twelve great battles ruining over-
thrown.
And knowest thou now from whence
I come—from him,
From waging bitter war with him:
and he,
That did not shun to smite me in
worse way,
Had yet that grace of courtesy in him
left,
He spared to lift his hand against the
King
Who made him knight: but many a
knight was slain;
And many more, and all his kith and
kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own
land.
And many more when Modred raised
revolt,
Forgetful of their troth and fealty,
clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with
me.
And of this remnant will I leave a
part,
True men who love me still, for whom
I live,
To guard thee in the wild hour coming
on,
Lest but a hair of this low head be
harm'd.
Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till
my death.
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies

Have err'd not, that I march to meet
 my doom.
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet
 to me,
 That I the King should greatly care
 to live;
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of
 my life.
 Bear with me for the last time while
 I show,
 Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou
 hast sinn'd.
 For when the Roman left us, and
 their law
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the
 ways
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there
 a deed
 Of prowess done redress'd a random
 wrong.
 But I was first of all the kings who
 drew
 The knighthood-errant of this realm
 and all
 The realms together under me, their
 Head,
 In that fair Order of my Table Round,
 A glorious company, the flower of
 men,
 To serve as model for the mighty
 world,
 And be the fair beginning of a time.
 I made them lay their hands in mine
 and swear
 To reverence the King, as if he were
 Their conscience, and their conscience
 as their King,
 To break the heathen and uphold the
 Christ,
 To ride abroad redressing human
 wrongs,
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to
 it,
 To honor his own word as if his
 God's,
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
 To love one maiden only, cleave to
 her,
 And worship her by years of noble
 deeds,
 Until they won her; for indeed I
 knew
 Of no more subtle master under
 heaven
 Than is the maiden passion for a
 maid,
 Not only to keep down the base in
 man,
 But teach high thought, and amiable
 words
 And courtliness, and the desire of
 fame,
 And love of truth, and all that makes
 a man.
 And all this throve before I wedded
 thee,

Believing, 'lo mine helpmate, one to
 feel
 My purpose and rejoicing in my
 joy.'
 Then came thy shameful sin with
 Lancelot;
 Then came the sin of Tristram and
 Isolt;
 Then others, following these my
 mightiest knights,
 And drawing foul ensample from fair
 names,
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
 Of all my heart had destined did ob-
 tain,
 And all thro' thee! so that this life of
 mine
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe
 and wrong,
 Not greatly care to lose; but rather
 think
 How sad it were for Arthur, should he
 live,
 To sit once more within his lonely
 hall,
 And miss the wonted number of my
 knights,
 And miss to hear high talk of noble
 deeds
 As in the golden days before thy sin.
 For which of us, who might be left,
 could speak
 Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance
 at thee?
 And in thy bowers of Camelot or of
 Usk
 Thy shadow still would glide from
 room to room,
 And I should evermore be vext with
 thee
 In hanging robe or vacant orna-
 ment,
 Or ghostly footfall echoing on the
 stair.
 For think not, tho' thou wouldst not
 love thy lord,
 Thy lord has wholly lost his love for
 thee.
 I am not made of so slight elements.
 Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
 shame.
 I hold that man the worst of public
 foes
 Who either for his own or children's
 sake,
 To save his blood from scandal, lets
 the wife
 Whom he knows false, abide and rule
 the house:
 For being thro' his cowardice allow'd
 Her station, taken everywhere for
 pure,
 She like a new disease, unknown to
 men,
 Creeps, no precaution used, among the
 crowd,

Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes,
 and saps
 The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
 pulse
 With devil's leaps, and poisons half
 the young.
 Worst of the worst were that man he
 that reigns!
 Better the King's waste hearth and
 aching heart
 Than thou reseated in thy place of
 light,
 The mockery of my people, and their
 bane."

He paused, and in the pause she
 crept an inch
 Nearer, and laid her hands about his
 feet.
 Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
 Then waiting by the doors the war-
 horse neigh'd
 As at a friend's voice, and he spake
 again:

"Yet think not that I come to urge
 thy crimes,
 I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
 I, whose vast pity almost makes me
 die
 To see thee, laying there thy golden
 head,
 My pride in happier summers, at my
 feet.
 The wrath which forced my thoughts
 on the fierce law,
 The doom of treason and the flaming
 death,
 (When first I learnt thee hidden here)
 is past.
 The pang — which while I weigh'd thy
 heart with one
 Too wholly true to dream untruth in
 thee,
 Made my tears burn — is also past —
 in part.
 And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,
 Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
 Forgives: do thou for thine own soul
 the rest.
 But how to take last leave of all I
 loved?
 O golden hair, with which I used to
 play
 Not knowing! O imperial-moulded
 form,
 And beauty such as never woman
 wore,
 Until it came a kingdom's curse with
 thee —
 I cannot touch thy lips, they are not
 mine,
 But Lancelot's: nay, they never were
 the King's.
 I cannot take thy hand; that too is
 flesh,

And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd;
 and mine own flesh,
 Here looking down on thine polluted,
 cries
 'I loathe thee:' yet not less, O Guine-
 vere,
 For I was ever virgin save for thee,
 My love thro' flesh hath wrought into
 my life
 So far, that my doom is, I love thee
 still.
 Let no man dream but that I love thee
 still.
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy
 soul,
 And so thou lean on our fair father
 Christ,
 Hereafter in that world where all are
 pure
 We two may meet before high God,
 and thou
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,
 and know
 I am thine husband — not a smaller
 soul,
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me
 that,
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now
 must I hence.
 Thro' the thick night I hear the trum-
 pet blow:
 They summon me their King to lead
 mine hosts
 Far down to that great battle in the
 west,
 Where I must strike against the man
 they call
 My sister's son — no kin of mine, who
 leagues
 With Lords of the White Horse,
 heathen, and knights,
 Traitors — and strike him dead, and
 meet myself
 Death, or I know not what mysterious
 doom.
 And thou remaining here wilt learn
 the event;
 But hither shall I never come again,
 Never lie by thy side; see thee no
 more —
 Farewell!"

And while she grovell'd at his feet,
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er
 her neck,
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen
 head,
 Perceived the waving of his hands
 that blest.

Then, listening till those armed
 steps were gone,
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her an-
 guish found
 The casement: "peradventure," so
 she thought,

"If I might see his face, and not be seen."

And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!

And near him the sad nuns with each a light

Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,

To guard and foster her for evermore.

And while he spake to these his helm
was lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon
clung

Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she

saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the
lights,



*"And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nuns with each a light."*

The Dragon of the great Pendragon-
ship

Blaze, making all the night a steam
of fire.

And even then he turn'd; and more
and more

The moony vapor rolling round the
King,

Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant
in it,

Enwound him fold by fold, and made
him gray

And grayer, till himself became as mist
Before her, moving ghostlike to his
doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and
cried aloud

"Oh Arthur!" there her voice brake
suddenly,

Then — as a stream that spouting from
a cliff

Fails in mid air, but gathering at the
base

Re-makes itself, and flashes down the
vale —

Went on in passionate utterance:

"Gone — my lord!
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be
slain!

And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
 Farewell? I should have answer'd his farewell.
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord the King,
 My own true lord! how dare I call him mine?
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,
 And makes me one pollution: he, the King,
 Call'd me polluted: shall I kill myself?
 What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,
 If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;
 No, nor by living can I live it down.
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
 The months will add themselves and make the years,
 The years will roll into the centuries,
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
 I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
 Let the world be; that is but of the world
 What else? what hope? I think there was a hope,
 Except he mock'd me when he spake of hope;
 His hope he call'd it; but he never mocks,
 For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
 And blessed be the King, who hath forgiven
 My wickedness to him, and left me hope
 That in mine own heart I can live down sin
 And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
 Before high God. Ah great and gentle lord,
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint
 Among his warring senses, to thy knights—
 To whom my false voluptuous pride, that took
 Full easily all impressions from below,
 Would not look up, or half-despised the height
 To which I would not or I could not climb—
 I thought I could not breathe in that fine air
 That pure severity of perfect light—
 I wanted warmth and color which I found
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,

Thou art the highest and most human too,
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so late?
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle? none:
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,
 But now it were too daring. Ah my God,
 What might I not have made of thy fair world,
 Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
 It was my duty to have loved the highest:
 It surely was my profit had I known:
 It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
 We needs must love the highest when we see it,
 Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand
 Grasp'd, made her vail her eyes: she look'd and saw
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said to her,
 "Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven?"
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
 All round her, weeping; and her heart was loosed
 Within her, and she wept with these and said,

"Ye know me then, that wicked one, who broke
 The vast design and purpose of the King.
 O shut me round with narrowing nunnery walls,
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying 'shame.'
 I must not scorn myself: he loves me still.
 Let no one dream but that he loves me still.
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me,
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you;
 Wear black and white, and be a nun like you,
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with your feasts;
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at your joys,
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your rites;

Pray and be pray'd for; lie before
 your shrines;
 Do each low office of your holy
 house;
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute
 dole
 To poor sick people, richer in His
 eyes
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than
 I;
 And treat their loathsome hurts and
 heal mine own;
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in
 prayer
 The sombre close of that voluptuous
 day,
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord
 the King."

She said: they took her to them-
 selves; and she
 Still hoping, fearing "is it yet too
 late?"
 Dwelt with them, till in time their
 Abbess died.
 Then she, for her good deeds and her
 pure life,
 And for the power of ministration in
 her,
 And likewise for the high rank she
 had borne,
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,
 lived
 For three brief years, and there, an
 Abbess, past
 To where beyond these voices there
 is peace.

End of "The Round Table."

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedi-
 vere,
 First made and latest left of all the
 knights,
 Told, when the man was no more than
 a voice
 In the white winter of his age, to
 those
 With whom he dwelt, new faces,
 other minds.

For on their march to westward,
 Bedivere,
 Who slowly paced among the slumber-
 ing host,
 Heard in his tent the moanings of the
 King:

"I found Him in the shining of the
 stars,
 I mark'd Him in the flowering of His
 fields,
 But in His ways with men I find Him
 not.
 I waged His wars, and now I pass and
 die.
 O me! for why is all around us
 here
 As if some lesser god had made the
 world,
 But had not force to shape it as he
 would,
 Till the High God behold it from be-
 yond,
 And enter it, and make it beautiful?
 Or else as if the world were wholly
 fair,
 But that these eyes of men are dense
 and dim,
 And have not power to see it as it is:
 Perchance, because we see not to the
 close; —

For I, being simple, thought to work
 His will,
 And have but stricken with the sword
 in vain;
 And all whereon I lean'd in wife and
 friend
 Is traitor to my peace, and all my
 realm
 Reels back into the beast, and is no
 more.
 My God, thou hast forgotten me in
 my death:
 Nay—God my Christ—I pass but
 shall not die."

Then, ere that last weird battle in
 the west,
 There came on Arthur sleeping, Ga-
 wain kill'd
 In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain
 blown
 Along a wandering wind, and past his
 ear
 Went shrilling, "Hollow, hollow all
 delight!
 Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass
 away.
 Farewell! there is an isle of rest for
 thee.
 And I am blown along a wandering
 wind,
 And hollow, hollow, hollow all de-
 light."
 And fainter onward, like wild birds
 that change
 Their season in the night and wail
 their way
 From cloud to cloud, down the long
 wind the dream
 Shrill'd; but in going mingled with
 dim cries

Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
 As of some lonely city sack'd by night,
 When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
 Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and call'd,
 "Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,
 Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these dim cries
 Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
 Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake:
 "O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
 Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
 But in their stead thy name and glory cling
 To all high places like a golden cloud
 For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
 Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
 Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
 And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise—
 I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
 And with him many of thy people, and knights
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
 Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
 Right well in heart they know thee for the King.
 Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 "Far other is this battle in the west.
 Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,
 And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,
 Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,
 And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine
 To war against my people and my knights.
 The king who fights his people fights himself.
 And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
 That strikes them dead is as my death to me.

Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
 Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I saw
 One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
 Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
 And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by league,
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyonnesse—
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
 And the long mountains ended in a coast
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
 There the pursuer could pursue no more,
 And he that fled no further fly the King;
 And there, that day when the great light of heaven
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
 On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.
 A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea:
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
 Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
 With formless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.
 For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
 And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;
 And some had visions out of golden youth,
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
 Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
 Was many a noble deed, many a base,
 And chance and craft and strength in single fights,
 And ever and anon with host to host
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash

Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and
 shrieks
 After the Christ, of those who falling
 down
 Look'd up for heaven, and only saw
 the mist;
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor
 knights,
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous
 blasphemies,
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of
 the lungs
 In that close mist, and cryings for the
 light,
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the
 dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after
 wail
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro'
 death
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that
 shore,
 Save for some whisper of the seething
 seas,
 A dead hush fell; but when the dolo-
 rous day
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling,
 came
 A bitter wind, clear from the North,
 and blew
 The mist aside, and with that wind the
 tide
 Rose, and the pale King glanced
 across the field
 Of battle: but no man was moving
 there;
 Nor any cry of Christian heard
 thereon,
 Nor yet of heathen; only the wan
 wave
 Brake in among dead faces, to and
 fro
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up
 and down
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the
 fallen,
 And shiver'd brands that once had
 fought with Rome,
 And rolling far along the gloomy
 shores
 The voice of days of old and days to
 be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir
 Bedivere,
 And whiter than the mist that all day
 long
 Had held the field of battle was the
 King:

"Hearest thou this great voice that
 shakes the world,
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon
 we move,
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,

My dead, as tho' they had not died
 for me? —
 O Bedivere, for on my heart hath
 fall'n
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be
 King.
 Behold, I seem but King among the
 dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "My King,
 King everywhere! and so the dead
 have kings,
 There also will I worship thee as King.
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I
 live
 Who love thee; but who hates thee,
 he that brought
 The heathen back among us, yonder
 stands,
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine
 house."

Then spake the King: "My house
 hath been my doom.
 But call not thou this traitor of my
 house
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof
 with me.
 My house are rather they who swear
 my vows,
 Yea, even while they brake them,
 own'd me King.
 And well for thee, saying in my dark
 hour,
 When all the purport of my throne
 hath fail'd,
 That quick or dead thou holdest me
 for King.
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry;
 And one last act of kinghood shalt
 thou see
 Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this
 the King
 Made at the man: then Modred smote
 his liege
 Hard on that helm which many a
 heathen sword
 Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one
 blow,
 Striking the last stroke with Excali-
 bur,
 Slew him, and all but slain himself,
 he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle
 roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter
 sea;
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by
 man,
 Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their
 lord,
 King Arthur. Then, because his
 wound was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the
field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren
land :

On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was
full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir
Bedivere :



“An arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword.”

“The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous
knights
Whereof this world holds record.
Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I
think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,

Delight our souls with talk of knight-
ly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the
halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho’ Merlin sware that I should come
again

To rule once more ; but, let what will
 be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
 That without help I cannot last till
 morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
 Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
 In those old days, one summer noon,
 an arm
 Rose up from out the bosom of the
 lake,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 Holding the sword — and how I row'd
 across
 And took it, and have worn it, like a
 king;
 And, whosoever I am sung or
 told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known:
 But now delay not: take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle
 mere:
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly
 bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
 thus,
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro'
 the helm —
 A little thing may harm a wounded
 man;
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring
 thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine
 he stept,
 And in the moon athwart the place of
 tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-
 wind sang
 Shri!ll, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
 stepping down
 By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed
 rock,
 Came on the shining levels of the
 lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
 moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
 ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against
 the hilt:
 For all the haft twinkled with diamond
 sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
 work
 Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so
 long
 That both his eyes were dazzled as he
 stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift
 mind,
 In act to throw: but at the last it
 seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the
 marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wound-
 ed King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission
 which I gave?
 What is it thou hast seen? or what
 hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "I heard the ripple washing in the
 reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the
 crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
 and pale:
 "Thou hast betray'd thy nature and
 thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as be-
 seem'd
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
 For surer sign had follow'd, either
 hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
 This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go
 again,
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the
 thing
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring
 me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second
 time
 Across the ridge, and paced beside
 the mere,
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
 thought;
 But when he saw the wonder of the
 hilt,
 How curiously and strangely chased,
 he smote
 His palms together, and he cried
 aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand
 away,
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy
 note,

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur,
breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
"Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels —
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,

And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge."
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the daïs-throne — were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir
Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall
I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and
my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble
chance,
And every chance brought out a noble
knight.
Such times have been not since the
light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of
myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is
dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty
world,
And I, the last, go forth companion-
less,
And the days darken round me, and
the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from
the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding
place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which
I have done
May He within himself make pure!
but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face
again,
Pray for my soul. More things are
wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Where-
fore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.
For what are men better than sheep
or goats
That nourish a blind life within the
brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands
of prayer
Both for themselves and those who
call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every
way
Bound by gold chains about the feet
of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long
way
With these thou seest — if indeed I go

(For all my mind is clouded with a
doubt) —
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any
snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it
lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with or-
chard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with
summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar
and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge
of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had past for
evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's win-
ter dawn
Amazed him, and he groan'd, "The
King is gone."
And therewithal came on him the weird
rhyme,
"From the great deep to the great
deep he goes."

Whereat he slowly turn'd and slowly
clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron
crag;
Thence mark'd the black hull moving
yet, and cried,
"He passes to be King among the
dead,
And after healing of his grievous
wound
He comes again; but — if he come no
more —
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon
black boat,
Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three
whereat we gazed
On that high day, when, clothed with
living light,
They stood before his throne in si-
lence, friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his
need?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there
came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,

Sounds, as if some fair city were one
voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,
and clomb
Ev'n to the highest he could climb,
and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of
hand,

Or thought he saw, the speck that
bare the King,
Down that long water opening on the
deep
Somewhere far off, pass on and on,
and go
From less to less and vanish into
light.
And the new sun rose bringing the new
year.

TO THE QUEEN.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land, as this to
thee —
Bear witness, that rememberable day,
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the
Prince
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering
life again
From halfway down the shadow of
the grave,
Past with thee thro' thy people and
their love,
And London roll'd one tide of joy
thro' all
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues
of man
And welcome! witness, too, the silent
cry,
The prayer of many a race and creed;
and clime —
Thunderless lightnings striking under
sea
From sunset and sunrise of all thy
realm,
And that true North, whereof we lately
heard
A strain to shame us "keep you to
yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! friends — your
love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and
go."
Is this the tone of empire? here the
faith
That made us rulers? this, indeed,
her voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-
goumont
Left mightiest of all peoples under
heaven?
What shock has fool'd her since, that
she should speak
So feebly? wealthier — wealthier —
hour by hour!
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among
her seas?
There rang her voice, when the full
city peal'd
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to
their crown

Are loyal to their own far sons, who
love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless
homes
For ever-broadening England, and her
throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one
isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if
she knows
And dreads it we are fall'n. — But
thou, my Queen,
Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
For one to whom I made it o'er his
grave
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war
with Soul
Rather than that gray king, whose
name, a ghost,
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped,
from mountain peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech
still; or him
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malle-
or's, one
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a
time
That hover'd between war and wan-
tonness,
And crownings and dethronements:
take withal
Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that
Heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance
back
From thine and ours: for some are
scared, who mark,
Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every vane with every
wind,
And wordy trucklings to the transient
hour,
And fierce or careless looseners of the
faith,
And Softness breeding scorn of simple
life,
Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,
Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n
from France,

And that which knows, but careful for
itself,
And that which knows not, ruling that
which knows
To its own harm: the goal of this
great world
Lies beyond sight: yet — if our slowly-
grown
And crown'd Republic's crowning
common-sense,

That saved her many times, not fail —
their fears
Are morning shadows huger than the
shapes
That cast them, not those gloomier
which forego
The darkness of that battle in the
West,
Where all of high and holy dies
away.

THE PRINCESS;

A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's
day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of
sun
Up to the people: thither flock'd at
noon
His tenants, wife and child, and
thither half
The neighboring borough with their
Institute
Of which he was the patron. I was
there
From college, visiting the son, — the
son
A Walter too, — with others of our
set,
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-
place.

And me that morning Walter
show'd the house,
Greek, set with busts: from vases in
the hall
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier
than their names,
Grew side by side; and on the pave-
ment lay
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the
park,
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones
of Time;
And on the tables every clime and
age
Jumbled together; celts and calumets,
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,
fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory sphere in
sphere,
The cursed Malayan crease, and
battle-clubs
From the isles of palm: and higher on
the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk
and deer,
His own forefathers' arms and armor
hung.

And "this" he said "was Hugh's at
Agin-court;

And that was old Sir Ralph's at As-
calon:

A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
With all about him" — which he
brought, and I

Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt
with knights,

Half-legend, half-historic, counts and
kings

Who laid about them at their wills
and died;

And mixt with these, a lady, one that
arm'd

Her own fair head, and sallying thro'
the gate,

Had beat her foes with slaughter from
her walls.

"O miracle of women," said the
book,

"O noble heart who, being strait-
besieged

By this wild king to force her to his
wish,

Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a
soldier's death,

But now when all was lost or seem'd
as lost —

Her stature more than mortal in the
burst

Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on
fire —

Brake with a blast of trumpets from
the gate,

And, falling on them like a thunder-
bolt,

She trampled some beneath her
horses' heels,

And some were whelm'd with missiles
of the wall,

And some were push'd with lances
from the rock,

And part were drown'd within the
whirling brook:

O miracle of noble womanhood!"

So sang the gallant glorious chroni-
cle;

And, I all rapt in this, "Come out,"
he said,

"To the Abbey: there is Aunt Eliza-
beth

And sister Lilia with the rest." We
 went
 (I kept the book and had my finger
 in it)
 Down thro' the park: strange was the
 sight to me;
 For all the sloping pasture murmur'd,
 sown
 With happy faces and with holiday.
 There moved the multitude, a thou-
 sand heads:
 The patient leaders of their Institute
 Taught them with facts. One rear'd
 a font of stone
 And drew, from butts of water on the
 slope,
 The fountain of the moment, playing,
 now
 A twisted snake, and now a rain of
 pearls,
 Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded
 ball
 Danced like a wisp: and somewhat
 lower down
 A man with knobs and wires and vials
 fired
 A cannon: Echo answer'd in her
 sleep
 From hollow fields: and here were
 telescopes
 For azure views; and there a group
 of girls
 In circle waited, whom the electric
 shock
 Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter:
 round the lake
 A little clock-work steamer paddling
 plied
 And shook the lilies: perch'd about
 the knolls
 A dozen angry models jetted steam:
 A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky
 groves
 And dropt a fairy parachute and
 past:
 And there thro' twenty posts of tele-
 graph
 They flash'd a saucy message to and
 fro
 Between the mimic stations; so that
 sport
 Went hand in hand with Science;
 elsewhere
 Pure sport: a herd of boys with
 clamor bowl'd
 And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd
 about
 Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men
 and maids
 Arranged a country dance, and flew
 thro' light
 And shadow, while the twangling
 violin
 Struck up with Soldier-laddie; and
 overhead

The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty
 lime
 Made noise with bees and breeze from
 end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking
 of the time;
 And long we gazed, but satiated at
 length
 Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and
 ivy-claspt,
 Of finest Gothic lighter than a
 fire,
 Thro' one wide chasm of time and
 frost they gave
 The park, the crowd, the house; but
 all within
 The sward was trim as any garden
 lawn:
 And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
 And Lilia with the rest, and lady
 friends
 From neighbor seats: and there was
 Ralph himself,
 A broken statue propt against the wall,
 As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,
 Half child half woman as she was,
 had wound
 A scarf of orange round the stony
 helm,
 And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
 That made the old warrior from his
 ivied nook
 Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb
 a feast
 Shone, silver-set; about it lay the
 guests,
 And there we join'd them: then the
 maiden Aunt
 Took this fair day for text, and from
 it preach'd
 An universal culture for the crowd,
 And all things great; but we, un-
 worthier, told
 Of college: he had climb'd across the
 spikes,
 And he had squeezed himself betwixt
 the bars,
 And he had breath'd the Proctor's
 dogs; and one
 Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common
 men,
 But honeying at the whisper of a lord;
 And one the Master, as a rogue in
 grain
 Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their
 heads I saw
 The feudal warrior lady-clad; which
 brought
 My book to mind: and opening this I
 read
 Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that
 rang

With tilt and tourney; then the tale
 of her
 That drove her foes with slaughter
 from her walls,
 And much I praised her nobleness,
 and "Where,"
 Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head
 (she lay
 Beside him) "lives there such a
 woman now?"

Quick answer'd Lilia "There are
 thousands now
 Such women, but convention beats
 them down:
 It is but bringing up; no more than
 that:
 You men have done it: how I hate
 you all!
 Ah, were I something great! I wish I
 were
 Some mighty poetess, I would shame
 you then,
 That love to keep us children! O I
 wish
 That I were some great princess, I
 would build
 Far off from men a college like a
 man's,
 And I would teach them all that men
 are taught;
 We are twice as quick!" And here
 she shook aside
 The hand that play'd the patron with
 her curls.

And one said smiling "Pretty were
 the sight
 If our old halls could change their
 sex, and flaunt
 With prudes for proctors, dowagers
 for deans,
 And sweet girl-graduates in their
 golden hair.
 I think they should not wear our rusty
 gowns,
 But move as rich as Emperor-moths,
 or Ralph
 Who shines so in the corner; yet I
 fear,
 If there were many Lilias in the brood,
 However deep you might embower the
 nest,
 Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sward
 She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
 "That's your light way; but I would
 make it death
 For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself
 she laugh'd;
 A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
 And sweet as English air could make
 her, she:

But Walter hail'd a score of names
 upon her,
 And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful
 Puss,"
 And swore he long'd at college,
 only long'd,
 All else was well, for she-society.
 They boated and they cricketed; they
 talk'd
 At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;
 They lost their weeks; they vext the
 souls of deans;
 They rode; they betted; made a hun-
 dred friends,
 And caught the blossom of the flying
 terms,
 But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-
 place,
 The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus
 he spoke,
 Part banter, part affection.
 "True," she said,
 "We doubt not that. O yes, you
 miss'd us much.
 I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you
 did."

She held it out; and as a parrot
 turns
 Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
 And takes a lady's finger with all care,
 And bites it for true heart and not for
 harm,
 So he with Lilia's. Daintily she
 shriek'd
 And wrung it. "Doubt my word
 again!" he said.
 "Come, listen! here is proof that you
 were miss'd:
 We seven stay'd at Christmas up to
 read;
 And there we took one tutor as to
 read:
 The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube
 and square
 Were out of season: never man, I
 think,
 So moulder'd in a sinecure as
 he:
 For while our cloisters echo'd frosty
 feet,
 And our long walks were stript as bare
 as brooms,
 We did but talk you over, pledge you
 all
 In wassail; often, like as many girls —
 Sick for the hollies and the yews of
 home —
 As many little trifling Lilias — play'd
 Charades and riddles as at Christmas
 here,
 And *what's my thought* and *when* and
where and *how*,
 And often told a tale from mouth to
 mouth
 As here at Christmas."

She remember'd that:
A pleasant game, she thought: she
liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the
rest.

But these—what kind of tales did
men tell men,
She wonder'd by themselves?

A half-disdain
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her
lips:

And Walter nodded at me; "*He*
began,
The rest would follow, each in turn;
and so

We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?
what kind?

Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas sole-
cisms,

Seven-headed monsters only made to
kill

Time by the fire in winter."

"Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer
too,"

Said Lilia; "Why not now?" the
maiden Aunt.

"Why not a summer's as a winter's
tale?

A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the
place,

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn!"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I
laugh'd

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden
Aunt

(A little sense of wrong had touch'd
her face

With color) turn'd to me with "As
you will;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

"Take Lilia, then, for heroine"
clamor'd he,

"And make her some great Princess,
six feet high,

Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!"

"Then follow me, the Prince,"
I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn!
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a
dream. —

Heroic seems our Princess as re-
quired —

But something made to suit with Time
and place,

A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,

A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange ex-
periments

For which the good Sir Ralph had
burnt them all —

This *were* a medley! we should have
him back

Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it
for us.

No matter: we will say whatever
comes.

And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a
song

To give us breathing-space."

So I began,
And the rest follow'd: and the women

sang
Between the rougher voices of the
men,

Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:
And here I give the story and the
songs.

I.

A prince I was, blue-eyed, and fair in
face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of
May,

With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a
girl,

For on my cradle shone the Northern
star.

There lived an ancient legend in
our house.

Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grand-
sire burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had fore-
told,

Dying, that none of all our blood
should know

The shadow from the substance, and
that one

Should come to fight with shadows
and to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more
or less,

An old and strange affection of the
house.

Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven
knows what:

On a sudden in the midst of men and
day,

And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-
tofore,

I seem'd to move among a world of
ghosts,

And feel myself the shadow of a
dream.

Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-
head cane,

And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd
"catalepsy."

My mother pitying made a thousand
prayers ;

My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that look'd on
her,

So gracious was her tact and tender-
ness :

But my good father thought a king a
king ;

He cared not for the affection of the
house ;

He held his sceptre like a pedant's
wand

To lash offence, and with long arms
and hands

Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders
from the mass

For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade,
betroth'd

To one, a neighboring Princess : she
to me

Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
At eight years old ; and still from
time to time

Came murmurs of her beauty from
the South,

And of her brethren, youths of puis-
sance ;

And still I wore her picture by my
heart,

And one dark tress ; and all around
them both

Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees
about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that
I should wed,

My father sent ambassadors with
furs

And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these
brought back

A present, a great labor of the loom ;
And therewithal an answer vague as
wind :

Besides, they saw the king ; he took
the gifts ;

He said there was a compact ; that
was true :

But then she had a will ; was he to
blame ?

And maiden fancies ; loved to live
alone

Among her women ; certain, would
not wed.

That morning in the presence room
I stood

With Cyril and with Florian, my two
friends :

The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts
and bursts

Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,

And almost my half-self, for still we
moved
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and
eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my
father's face

Grow long and troubled like a rising
moon,

Inflamed with wrath : he started on
his feet,

Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,
and rent

The wonder of the loom thro' warp
and woof

From skirt to skirt ; and at the last
he sware

That he would send a hundred thou-
sand men,

And bring her in a whirlwind : then
he chew'd

The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and
cook'd his spleen,

Communing with his captains of the
war.

At last I spoke. " My father, let me
go.

It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hos-
pitable :

Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once
seen,

Whate'er my grief to find her less
than fame,

May rue the bargain made." And
Florian said :

" I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess ; she,
you know,

Who wedded with a nobleman from
thence :

He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land :
Thro' her this matter might be sifted
clean."

And Cyril whisper'd : " Take me with
you too."

Then laughing " what, if these weird
seizures come

Upon you in those lands, and no one
near

To point you out the shadow from the
truth !

Take me : I'll serve you better in a
strait ;

I grate on rusty hinges here." but
" No !"

Roar'd the rough king, " you shall not ;
we ourself

Will crush her pretty maiden fancies
dead

In iron gauntlets : break the council
up."

But when the council broke, I rose
 and past
 Thro' the wild woods that hung about
 the town;
 Found a still place, and pluck'd her
 likeness out;
 Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it
 lying bathed
 In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd
 trees:
 What were those fancies? wherefore
 break her troth?
 Proud look'd the lips: but while I
 meditated
 A wind arose and rush'd upon the
 South,
 And shook the songs, the whispers,
 and the shrieks
 Of the wild woods together; and a
 Voice
 Went with it, "Follow, follow, thou
 shalt win."

Then, ere the silver sickle of that
 month
 Became her golden shield, I stole from
 court
 With Cyril and with Florian, unper-
 ceived,
 Cat-footed thro' the town and half in
 dread
 To hear my father's clamor at our
 backs
 With Ho! from some bay-window
 shake the night;
 But all was quiet: from the bastion'd
 walls
 Like threaded spiders, one by one, we
 dropt,
 And flying reach'd the frontier: then
 we crost
 To a livelier land; and so by tilth
 and grange,
 And vines, and blowing bosks of wil-
 derness,
 We gain'd the mother-city thick with
 towers,
 And in the imperial palace found the
 king.

His name was Gama; crack'd and
 small his voice,
 But bland the smile that like a wrin-
 kling wind
 On glassy water drove his cheek in
 lines;
 A little dry old man, without a star,
 Not like a king: three days he feasted
 us,
 And on the fourth I spake of why we
 came,
 And my betroth'd. "You do us,
 Prince," he said,
 Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,
 "All honor. We remember love our-
 selves

In our sweet youth: there did a com-
 pact pass
 Long summers back, a kind of cere-
 mony—
 I think the year in which our olives
 fail'd.
 I would you had her, prince, with all
 my heart,
 With my full heart: but there were
 widows here,
 Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady
 Blanche;
 They fed her theories, in and out of
 place
 Maintaining that with equal hus-
 bandry
 The woman were an equal to the man.
 They harp'd on this; with this our
 banquets rang;
 Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots
 of talk;
 Nothing but this; my very ears were hot
 To hear them: knowledge, so my
 daughter held,
 Was all in all: they had but been, she
 thought,
 As children; they must lose the child,
 assume
 The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she
 wrote,
 Too awful, sure, for what they treated
 of,
 But all she is and does is awful;
 odes
 About this losing of the child; and
 rhymes
 And dismallyrics, prophesying change
 Beyond all reason: these the women
 sang;
 And they that know such things—I
 sought but peace;
 No critic I—would call them master-
 pieces:
 They master'd *me*. At last she begg'd
 a boon,
 A certain summer-palace which I
 have
 Hard by your father's frontier: I said
 no,
 Yet being an easy man, gave it: and
 there,
 All wild to found an University
 For maidens, on the spur she fled;
 and more
 We know not,—only this: they see
 no men,
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look
 upon her
 As on a kind of paragon; and I
 (Pardon me saying it) were much loth
 to breed
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine: but
 since
 (And I confess with right) you think
 me bound

In some sort, I can give you letters to
her;
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate
your chance
Almost as naked nothing."

Thus the king;
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to
slur
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all
frets
But chafing me on fire to find my
bride)
Went forth again with both my
friends. We rode
Many a long league back to the North.
At last
From hills, that look'd across a land
of hope,
We dropt with evening on a rustic
town
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-
curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties;
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd
mine host
To council, plied him with his richest
wines,
And show'd the late-writ letters of
the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble; then ex-
claim'd
Averring it was clear against all rules
For any man to go: but as his brain
Began to mellow, "If the king," he
said,
"Had given us letters, was he bound
to speak?
The king would bear him out;" and
at the last —
The summer of the vine in all his
veins —
"No doubt that we might make it
worth his while.
She once had passed that way; he
heard her speak;
She scared him; life! he never saw
the like;
She look'd as grand as doomsday and
as grave:
And he, he revered his liege-lady
there;
He always made a point to post with
mares;
His daughter and his housemaid were
the boys:
The land, he understood, for miles
about
Was till'd by women; all the swine
were sows,
And all the dogs" —

But while he jested thus,

A thought flash'd thro' me which I
clothed in act,
Remembering how we three presented
Maid
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide
of feast,
In masque or pageant at my father's
court.
We sent mine host to purchase female
gear;
He brought it, and himself, a sight to
shake
The midriff of despair with laughter,
help
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden
plumes
We rustled: him we gave a costly
bribe
To guerdon silence, mounted our good
steeds,
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we
rode,
And rode till midnight when the col-
lege lights
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse
And linden alley: then we past an
arch,
Whereon a woman-statue rose with
wings
From four wing'd horses dark against
the stars;
And some inscription ran along the
front,
But deep in shadow: further on
we gain'd
A little street half garden and half
house;
But scarce could hear each other
speak for noise
Of clocks and chimes, like silver ham-
mers falling
On silver anvils, and the splash and
stir
Of fountains spouted up and shower-
ing down
In meshes of the jasmine and the
rose:
And all about us peal'd the nightin-
gale,
Rapt in her song, and careless of the
snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a
sign,
By two sphere lamps blazon'd like
Heaven and Earth
With constellation and with con-
tinent,
Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable
wench
Came running at the call, and help'd
us down.

Then stept a buxon hostess forth,
 and sail'd,
 Full-blown, before us into rooms which
 gave
 Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost
 In laurel: her we ask'd of that and
 this,
 And who were tutors. "Lady
 Blanche," she said,
 "And Lady Psyche." "Which was
 prettiest,
 Best-natured?" "Lady Psyche."
 "Hers are we,"
 One voice, we cried; and I sat down
 and wrote,
 In such a hand as when a field of corn
 Bows all its ears before the roaring
 East;
 "Three ladies of the Northern empire
 pray
 Your Highness would enroll them with
 your own,
 As Lady Psyche's pupils."
 This I seal'd:
 The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
 And rais'd the blinding bandage from
 his eyes:
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
 And then to bed, where half in doze I
 seem'd
 To float about a glimmering night,
 and watch
 A full sea glazed with muffled moon-
 light, swell
 On some dark shore just seen that it
 was rich.

II.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears.
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears!
 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

At break of day the College Portress
 came:
 She brought us Academic silks, in hue
 The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
 And zoned with gold; and now when
 these were on,
 And we as rich as moths from dusk
 cocoons,
 She, courtesying her obeisance, let us
 know
 The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,
 I first, and following thro' the porch
 that sang
 All round with laurel, issued in a court
 Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with
 lengths

Of classic frieze, with ampie awnings
 gay
 Betwixt the pillars, and with great
 urns of flowers.
 The Muses and the Graces, group'd in
 threes,
 Enring'd a billowing fountain in the
 midst;
 And here and there on lattice edges
 lay
 Or book or lute; but hastily we past,
 And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper
 sat,
 With two tame leopards couch'd be-
 side her throne
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,
 The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
 Of some clear planet close upon the
 Sun,
 Than our man's earth; such eyes were
 in her head,
 And so much grace and power, breath-
 ing down
 From over her arch'd brows, with
 every turn
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long
 hands,
 And to her feet. She rose her height,
 and said:

"We give you welcome: not with-
 out redound
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye
 come,
 The first-fruits of the stranger: after-
 time,
 And that full voice which circles round
 the grave,
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with
 me.
 What! are the ladies of your land so
 tall?"
 "We of the court" said Cyril. "From
 the court"
 She answer'd, "then ye know the
 Prince?" and he:
 "The climax of his age! as tho' there
 were
 One rose in all the world, your High-
 ness that,
 He worships your ideal:" she replied:
 "We scarcely thought in our own hall
 to hear
 This barren verbiage, current among
 men,
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compli-
 ment.
 Your flight from out your bookless
 wilds would seem
 As arguing love of knowledge and of
 power;
 Your language proves you still the
 child. Indeed,

We dream not of him: when we set
 our hand
 To this great work, we purposed with
 ourself
 Never to wed. You likewise will do
 well,
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and
 fling
 The tricks, which make us toys of
 men, that so,
 Some future time, if so indeed you will,
 You may with those self-styled our
 lords ally
 Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale
 with scale."

At those high words, we conscious
 of ourselves,
 Perused the matting; then an officer
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such
 as these:
 Not for three years to correspond with
 home;
 Not for three years to cross the liber-
 ties;
 Not for three years to speak with any
 men;
 And many more, which hastily sub-
 scribed,
 We enter'd on the boards: and "Now,"
 she cried,
 "Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.
 Look, our hall!
 Our statues! — not of those that men
 desire,
 Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode,
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East;
 but she
 That taught the Sabine how to rule,
 and she
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman
 brows
 Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and
 lose
 Convention, since to look on noble
 forms
 Makes noble thro' the sensuous organ-
 ism
 That which is higher. O lift your
 natures up:
 Embrace our aims: work out your
 freedom. Girls,
 Knowledge is now no more a fountain
 seal'd:
 Drink deep, until the habits of the
 slave,
 The sins of emptiness, gossip and
 spite
 And slander, die. Better not be at all
 Than not be noble. Leave us: you
 may go:
 To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue

The fresh arrivals of the week before;
 For they press in from all the prov-
 inces,
 And fill the hive."

She spoke, and bowing waved
 Dismissal: back again we crost the
 court
 To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,
 There sat along the forms, like morn-
 ing doves
 That sun their milky bosoms on the
 thatch,
 A patient range of pupils; she herself
 Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
 A quick brunette, well-moulded, fal-
 con-eyed,
 And on the hither side, or so she
 look'd,
 Of twenty summers. At her left, a
 child,
 In shining draperies, headed like a
 star,
 Her maiden babe, a double April
 old,
 Aglaïa slept. We sat: the Lady
 glanced:
 Then Florian, but no livelier than the
 dame
 That whisper'd "Asses' ears," among
 the sedge,
 "My sister." "Comely, too, by all
 that's fair,"
 Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and
 she began.

"This world was once a fluid haze
 of light,
 Till toward the centre set the starry
 tides,
 And eddied into suns, that wheeling
 cast
 The planets: then the monster, then
 the man;
 Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in
 skins,
 Raw from the prime, and crushing
 down his mate;
 As yet we find in barbarous isles, and
 here
 Among the lowest."

Thereupon she took
 A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious
 past;
 Glanced at the legendary Amazon
 As emblematic of a nobler age;
 Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke
 of those
 That lay at wine with Lar and Lucu-
 mo;
 Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Ro-
 man lines
 Of empire, and the woman's state in
 each,
 How far from just; till warming with
 her theme

She fulminated out her scorn of laws
 Salique
 And little-footed China, touch'd on
 Mahomet
 With much contempt, and came to
 chivalry :
 When some respect, however slight,
 was paid
 To woman, superstition all awry :
 However then commenced the dawn :
 a beam
 Had slanted forward, falling in a
 land
 Of promise ; fruit would follow. Deep,
 indeed,
 Their debt of thanks to her who first
 had dared
 To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
 Disyoke their necks from custom, and
 assert
 None lordlier than themselves but
 that which made
 Woman and man. She had founded ;
 they must build.
 Here might they learn whatever men
 were taught :
 Let them not fear : some said their
 heads were less :
 Some men's were small ; not they the
 least of men ;
 For often fineness compensated size :
 Besides the brain was like the hand,
 and grew
 With using ; thence the man's, if more
 was more ;
 He took advantage of his strength to
 be
 First in the field : some ages had been
 lost ;
 But woman ripen'd earlier, and her
 life
 Was longer ; and albeit their glorious
 names
 Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since
 in truth
 The highest is the measure of the man,
 And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
 Nor those horn-handed breakers of
 the glebe,
 But Homer, Plato, Verulam ; even so
 With woman : and in arts of govern-
 ment
 Elizabeth and others ; arts of war
 The peasant Joan and others ; arts of
 grace .
 Sappho and others vied with any man ;
 And, last not least, she who had left
 her place,
 And bow'd her state to them, that they
 might grow
 To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
 In the arms of leisure, sacred from
 the blight
 Of ancient influence and scorn.
 At last
 She rose upon a wind of prophecy

Dilating on the future ; " everywhere
Two heads in council, two beside the
hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the
world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummetts dropt for one to sound
the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the
mind :
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic,
more :
And everywhere the broad and bound-
less Earth
Should bear a double growth of those
rare souls,
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the
blood of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us :
 the rest
 Parted; and, glowing full-faced wel-
 come; she
 Began to address us, and was moving
 on
 In gratulation, till as when a boat
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flap
 all her voice
 Faltering and fluttering in her throat,
 she cried
 " My brother ! " " Well, my sister."
 " O," she said,
 " What do you here ? and in this
 dress ? and these ?
 Why who are these ? a wolf within
 the fold !
 A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gra-
 cious to me !
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all !"
 " No plot, no plot," he answer'd.
 " Wretched boy,
 How saw you not the inscription on
 the gate,
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF
 DEATH ? "
 " And if I had," he answer'd, " who
 could think
 The softer Adams of your Academe,
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were
 such
 As chanted on the blanching bones of
 men ? "
 " But you will find it otherwise " she
 said.
 " You jest : ill jesting with edge-tools !
 my vow
 Binds me to speak, and O that iron
 will,
 That axelike edge unturnable, our
 Head,
 The Princess." " Well then, Psyche,
 take my life,
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange
 For warning : bury me beside the
 gate,

And cut this epitaph above my bones ;
Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
All for the common good of womankind."
 "Let me die too," said Cyril, "having
 seen

And heard the Lady Psyche."

I struck in :
 "Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the
 truth ;
 Receive it ; and in me behold the
 Prince

Your countryman, affianced years ago
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she
 was,

And thus (what other way was left) I
 came."

"O Sir, O Prince, I have no country ;
 none ;

If any, this ; but none. Whate'er I
 was

Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
 Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may
 not breathe

Within this vestal limit, and how
 should I,

Who am not mine, say, live : the
 thunder-bolt

Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ;
 it falls."

"Yet pause," I said : "for that in-
 scription there,"

I think no more of deadly lurks therein,
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
 To scare the fowl from fruit : if more
 there be,

If more and acted on, what follows ?
 war ;

Your own work marr'd : for this your
 Academe,

Whichever side be Victor, in the hal-
 loo

Will topple to the trumpet down, and
 pass

With all fair theories only made to
 gild

A stormless summer." "Let the
 Princess judge

Of that" she said : "farewell, Sir —
 and to you.

I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I re-
 join'd,

"The fifth in line from that old Flo-
 rian,

Yet hangs his portrait in my father's
 hall

(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle
 brow

Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he
 fell,

And all else fled : we point to it, and
 we say,

The loyal warmth of Florian is not
 cold,

But branches current yet in kindred
 veins."

"Are you that Psyche," Florian add-
 ed : "she

With whom I sang about the morning
 hills,

Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the
 purple fly,

And snared the squirrel of the glen ?
 are you

That Psyche, wont to bind my throbb-
 ing brow,

To smoothe my pillow, mix the foam-
 ing draught

Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and
 read

My sickness down to happy dreams ?
 are you

That brother-sister Psyche, both in
 one ?

You were that Psyche, but what are
 you now ?"

"You are that Psyche," Cyril said,
 "for whom

I would be that for ever which I seem,
 Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
 And glean your scatter'd sapience."

Then once more,
 "Are you that Lady Psyche," I began,

"That on her bridal morn before she
 past

From all her old companions, when
 the king

Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that
 ancient ties

Would still be dear beyond the south-
 ern hills ;

That were there any of our people
 there

In want or peril, there was one to hear
 And help them ? look ! for such are
 these and I."

"Are you that Psyche," Florian ask'd,
 "to whom,

In gentler days, your arrow-wounded
 fawn

Came flying while you sat beside the
 well ?

The creature laid his muzzle on your
 lap,

And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it,
 and the blood

Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you
 wept.

That was fawn's blood, not brother's,
 yet you wept.

O by the bright head of my little
 niece,

You were that Psyche, and what are
 you now ?"

"You are that Psyche," Cyril said
 again,

"The mother of the sweetest little
 maid,

That ever crow'd for kisses."

"Out upon it !"

She answer'd, "peace! and why should
 I not play
 The Spartan Mother with emotion,
 be
 The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?
 Him you call great: he for the com-
 mon weal,
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,
 As I might slay this child, if good
 need were,
 Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on
 whom
 The secular emancipation turns
 Of half this world, be swerved from
 right to save
 A prince, a brother? a little will I
 yield.
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well
 for you.
 O hard, when love and duty clash! I
 fear
 My conscience will not count me fleck-
 less; yet —
 Hear my conditions: promise (other-
 wise
 You perish) as you came, to slip away
 To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be
 said,
 These women were too barbarous,
 would not learn;
 They fled, who might have shamed
 us: promise, all."

What could we else, we promised
 each; and she,
 Like some wild creature newly-caged,
 commenced
 A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
 By Florian; holding out her lily
 arms
 Took both his hands, and smiling
 faintly said:
 "I knew you at the first: tho' you
 have grown
 You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and
 glad
 To see you, Florian. I give thee to
 death,
 My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon
 it.
 Our mother, is she well?"

With that she kiss'd
 His forehead, then, a moment after,
 clung.
 About him, and betwixt them blos-
 som'd up
 From out a common vein of memory
 Sweet household talk, and phrases of
 the hearth,
 And far allusion, till the gracious
 dews
 Began to glisten and to fall: and
 while
 They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came
 a voice,

"I brought a message here from Lady
 Blanche."
 Back started she, and turning round
 we saw
 The Lady Blanche's daughter where
 she stood,
 Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
 A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
 That clad her like an April daffodilly
 (Her mother's color) with her lips
 apart,
 And all her thoughts as fair within
 her eyes,
 As bottom agates seen to wave and
 float
 In crystal currents of clear morning
 seas.

So stood that same fair creature at
 the door.
 Then Lady Psyche, "Ah — Melissa —
 you!
 You heard us?" and Melissa, "O
 pardon me;
 I heard, I could not help it, did not
 wish:
 But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me
 not,
 Nor think I bear that heart within my
 breast,
 To give three gallant gentlemen to
 death."
 "I trust you," said the other, "for
 we two
 Were always friends, none closer, elm
 and vine:
 But yet your mother's jealous tem-
 perament —
 Let not your prudence, dearest,
 drowse, or prove
 The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
 This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
 My honor, these their lives." "Ah,
 fear me not"
 Replied Melissa; "no — I would not
 tell,
 No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,
 No, not to answer, Madam, all those
 hard things
 That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."
 "Be it so" the other, "that we still
 may lead
 The new light up, and culminate in
 peace,
 For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."
 Said Cyril, "Madam, he the wisest
 man
 Feasted the woman wisest then, in
 halls
 Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
 (Tho' Madam *you* should answer, *we*
 would ask)
 Less welcome find among us, if you
 came
 Among us, debtors for our lives to
 you,

Myself for something more." He said
 not what,
 But "Thanks," she answer'd "Go:
 we have been too long
 Together: keep your hoods about the
 face;
 They do so that affect abstraction
 here.
 Speak little; mix not with the rest;
 and hold
 Your promise: all, I trust, may yet
 be well."

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the
 child,
 And held her round the knees against
 his waist,
 And blew the swoll'n cheek of a
 trumpeter,
 While Psyche watch'd them, smiling,
 and the child
 Push'd her flat hand against his face
 and laugh'd;
 And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd
 For half the day thro' stately theatres
 Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we
 sat, we heard

The grave Professor. On the lecture
 slate
 The circle rounded under female
 hands
 With flawless demonstration: follow'd
 then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
 With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted
 out

By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
 And quoted odes, and jewels five-
 words-long

That on the stretch'd forefinger of all
 Time

Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all
 That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
 The total chronicles of man, the mind,
 The morals, something of the frame,
 the rock,

The star, the bird, the fish, the shell,
 the flower,

Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
 And whatsoever can be taught and
 known;

Till like three horses that have broken
 fence,

And glutted all night long breast-
 deep in corn,

We issued gorged with knowledge,
 and I spoke:

"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well
 as we."

"They hunt old trails," said Cyril,
 "very well;

But when did woman ever yet in-
 vent?"

"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian;
 "have you learnt

No more from Psyche's lecture, you
 that talk'd

The trash that made me sick, and
 almost sad?"

"O trash," he said, "but with a ker-
 nel in it.

Should I not call her wise, who made
 me wise?

And learnt? I learnt more from her
 in a flash,

Than if my brainpan were an empty
 hull,

And every Muse tumbled a science
 in.

A thousand hearts lie fallow in these
 halls,

And round these halls a thousand
 baby loves

Fly twanging headless arrows at the
 hearts,

Whence follows many a vacant pang;
 but O

With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger
 boy,

The Head of all the golden-shafted
 firm,

The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche
 too;

He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and
 now

What think you of it, Florian? do I
 chase

The substance or the shadow? will it
 hold?

I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
 No ghostly hauntings like his High-
 ness. I

Flatter myself that always every-
 where

I know the substance when I see it.
 Well,

Are castles shadows? Three of them?

Is she

The sweet proprietress a shadow? If
 not,

Shall those three castles patch my
 tatter'd coat?

For dear are those three castles to my
 wants,

And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
 And two dear things are one of double

worth,

And much I might have said, but that
 my zone

Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O
 to hear

The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty
 plants

Imbibing! once or twice I thought to
 roar,

To break my chain, to shake my
 mane: but thou,

Modulate me, Soul of mincing mim-
 icry!

Make liquid treble of that bassoon,
 my throat;

Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
 Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;
 Abate the stride, which speaks of man, and loose
 A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
 Where they like swallows coming out of time
 Will wonder why they came: but hark the bell
 For dinner, let us go!"

And in we stream'd
 Among the columns, pacing staid and still

By twos and threes, till all from end to end
 With beauties every shade of brown and fair

In colors gayer than the morning mist,
 The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.

How might a man not wander from his wits

Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own

Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,

The second-sight of some Astræan age,
 Sat compass'd with professors: they, the while,

Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro:

A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms

Of art and science: Lady Blanche alone

Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,

With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,

Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat
 In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace
 Concluded, and we sought the gardens: there

One walk'd reciting by herself, and one

In this hand held a volume as to read,
 And smoothed a petted peacock down with that:

Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
 Or under arches of the marble bridge
 Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sought

In the orange thickets: others tost a ball

Above the fountain-jets, and back again

With laughter: others lay about the lawns,

Of the older sort, and murmur'd that their May

Was passing: what was learning unto them?

They wish'd to marry; they could rule a house;

Men hated learned women: but we three

Sat muffled like the Fates; and often came

Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
 Of gentle satire, kin to charity,
 That harm'd not: then day droopt; the chapel bells

Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt with those

Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,

Before two streams of light from wall to wall,

While the great organ almost burst his pipes,

Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court

A long melodious thunder to the sound
 Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
 The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven

A blessing on her labors for the world.

III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,

Wind of the western sea,

Low, low, breathe and blow,

Wind of the western sea!

Over the rolling waters go,

Come from the dying moon, and blow,

Blow him again to me;

While my little one, while my pretty one,

sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,

Father will come to thee soon;

Rest, rest, on mother's breast,

Father will come to thee soon;

Father will come to his babe in the nest,

Silver sails all out of the west

Under the silver moon:

Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,

sleep.

Morn in the white wake of the morning star

Came furrowing all the orient into gold.

We rose, and each by other drest with care

Descended to the court that lay three parts

In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd

Above the darkness from their native East.

There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd

Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble, approach'd

Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,

Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes

The circled Iris of a night of tears;
 "And fly," she cried, "O fly, while
 yet you may!"

My mother knows:" and when I
 ask'd her "how,"

"My fault," she wept, "my fault! and
 yet not mine;

Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon
 me.

My mother, 'tis her wont from night
 to night

To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
 She says the Princess should have
 been the Head,

Herself and Lady Psyche the two
 arms;

And so it was agreed when first they
 came;

But Lady Psyche was the right hand
 now,

And she the left, or not, or seldom
 used;

Hers more than half the students, all
 the love.

And so last night she fell to canvass
 you:

Her countrywomen! she did not envy
 her.

'Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
 Girls? — more like men!' and at these
 words the snake,

My secret, seem'd to stir within my
 breast;

And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my
 cheek

Began to burn and burn, and her lynx
 eye

To fix and make me hotter, till she
 laugh'd:

'O marvellously modest maiden, you!
 Men! girls, like men! why, if they
 had been men

You need not set your thoughts in
 rubric thus

For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I
 am shamed

That I must needs repeat for my
 excuse

What looks so little graceful: 'men'
 (for still

My mother went revolving on the
 word)

'And so they are, — very like men
 indeed —

And with that woman closeted for
 hours!'

Then came these dreadful words out
 one by one,

'Why — these — *are* — men.' I shud-
 der'd: 'and you know it.'

'O ask me nothing,' I said: 'And
 she knows too,

And she conceals it.' So my mother
 clutch'd

The truth at once, but with no word
 from me;

And now thus early risen she goes to
 inform

The Princess: Lady Psyche will be
 crush'd;

But you may yet be saved, and there-
 fore fly:

But heal me with your pardon ere you
 go."

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a
 blush?"

Said Cyril: "Pale one, blush again:
 than wear

Those lilies, better blush our lives
 away.

Yet let us breathe for one hour more
 in Heaven"

He added, "lest some classic Angel
 speak

In scorn of us, 'They mounted, Gany-
 medes,

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second
 morn.'

But I will melt this marble into wax
 To yield us farther furlough:" and he
 went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls,
 and thought

He scarce would prosper. "Tell us,"
 Florian ask'd,

"How grew this feud betwixt the
 right and left."

"O long ago," she said, "betwixt these
 two

Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my
 mother,

Too jealous, often fretful as the wind
 Pent in a crevice: much I bear with

her:

I never knew my father, but she says
 (God help her) she was wedded to a

fool;

And still she rail'd against the state
 of things.

She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,
 And from the Queen's decease she

brought her up.

But when your sister came she won
 the heart

Of Ida: they were still together, grew
 (For so they said themselves) inoscu-

lated;

Consonant chords that shiver to one
 note;

One mind in all things: yet my mother
 still

Affirms your Psyche thieved her the-
 ories,

And angled with them for her pupil's
 love:

She calls her plagiarist; I know not
 what:

But I must go: I dare not tarry," and
 light,

As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florian gazing after
her,
"An open-hearted maiden, true and
pure.
If I could love, why this were she:
how pretty
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd
again,
As if to close with Cyril's random
wish:
Not like your Princess cramm'd with
erring pride,
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags
in tow."

"The crane," I said, "may chatter
of the crane,
The dove may murmur of the dove,
but I
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.
My princess, O my princess! true she
errs,
But in her own grand way: being her-
self
Three times more noble than three
score of men,
She sees herself in every woman else,
And so she wears her error like a
crown
To blind the truth and me: for her,
and her,
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
The nectar; but — ah she — whene'er
she moves
The Samian Herè rises and she speaks
A Memnon smitten with the morning
Sun."

So saying from the court we paced,
and gain'd
The terrace ranged along the North-
ern front,
And leaning there on those balusters,
high
Above the empurpled champaign,
drank the gale
That blown about the foliage under-
neath,
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither
came
Cyril, and yawning "O hard task,"
he cried;
"No fighting shadows here! I forced
a way
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and
gnarl'd.
Better to clear prime forests, heave
and thump
A league of street in summer solstice
down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentle-
woman.
I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found
her there

At point to move, and settled in her
eyes
The green malignant light of coming
storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase
well-oil'd,
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek
I pray'd
Concealment; she demanded who we
were,
And why we came? I fabled nothing
fair,
But, your example pilot, told her all.
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand
and eye.
But when I dwelt upon your old affi-
ance,
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd
astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the
gate,
And our three lives. True — we had
limed ourselves
With open eyes, and we must take
the chance.
But such extremes, I told her, well
might harm
The woman's cause. 'Not more than
now,' she said,
'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'
I tried the mother's heart. Shame
might befall
Melissa, knowing, saying not she
knew:
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal
with that.'
I spoke of war to come and many
deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to
speak,
And duty duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I
knew
No rock so hard but that a little
wave
May beat admission in a thousand
years,
I recommenced; 'Decide not ere you
pause.
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third — the authentic
foundress you.
I offer boldly: we will seat you high-
est:
Wink at our advent: help my prince
to gain
His rightful bride, and here I promise
you
Some palace in our land, where you
shall reign
The head and heart of all our fair she-
world,
And your great name flow on with
broadening time
For ever.' Well, she balanced this a
little,

And told me she would answer us to-day,
Meantime be mute: thus much, nor more I gain'd."

He ceasing, came a message from the Head.
"That afternoon the Princess rode to take
The dip of certain strata to the North.
Would we go with her? we should find the land
Worth seeing; and the river made a fall
Out yonder:" then she pointed on to where
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all
Its range of duties to the appointed hour.
Then summon'd to the porch we went.
She stood
Among her maidens, higher by the head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty masks,
And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet I felt
My heart beat thick with passion and with awe;
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:
"O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not
Too harsh to your companion yesternorn;

Unwillingly we spake." "No — not to her,"
I answer'd, "but to one of whom we spake
Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say."
"Again?" she cried, "are you ambassadors?
From him to me? we give you, being strange,
A license: speak, and let the topic die."

I stammer'd that I knew him — could have wish'd —
"Our king expects — was there no precontract?
There is no truer-hearted — ah, you seem
All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but long'd
To follow: surely, if your Highness keep
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to death,
Or baser courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy," she said, "can he not read — no books?
Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals in that
Which men delight in, martial exercise?
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a girl;
As girls were once, as we ourself have been:
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt with them:
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,
Being other — since we learnt our meaning here,
To lift the woman's fall'n divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile
"And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,
At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out
She kept her state, and left the drunken king
To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms."

"Alas your Highness breathes full East," I said,
"On that which leans to you. I know the Prince,

I prize his truth: and then how vast
 a work
 To assail this gray præminence of
 man!
 You grant me license; might I use it?
 think;
 Ere half be done perchance your life
 may fail;
 Then comes the feeble heiress of your
 plan,
 And takes and ruins all; and thus
 your pains
 May only make that footprint upon
 sand
 Which old-recurring waves of preju-
 dice
 Resmooth to nothing: might I dread
 that you,
 With only Fame for spouse and your
 great deeds
 For issue, yet may live in vain, and
 miss,
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts
 her due,
 Love, children, happiness?"
 And she exclaim'd,
 "Peace, you young savage of the
 Northern wild!
 What! tho' your Prince's love were
 like a God's,
 Have we not made ourself the sacri-
 fice?
 You are bold indeed: we are not
 talk'd to thus:
 Yet will we say for children, would
 they grew
 Like field-flowers everywhere! we like
 them well:
 But children die; and let me tell you,
 girl,
 Howe'er you babble, great deeds can-
 not die;
 They with the sun and moon renew
 their light
 For ever, blessing those that look on
 them.
 Children — that men may pluck them
 from our hearts,
 Kill us with pity, break us with our-
 selves —
 O — children — there is nothing upon
 earth
 More miserable than she that has a son
 And sees him err: nor would we work
 for fame;
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the ap-
 plause of Great,
 Who learns the one for sto whence
 after-hands
 May move the world, tho' she herself
 effect
 But little: wherefore up and act, nor
 shrink
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated
 By frail successors. Would, indeed,
 we had been,

In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
 Of giants living, each, a thousand
 years,
 That we might see our own work out,
 and watch
 The sandy footprint harden into
 stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in
 myself
 If that strange Poet-princess with her
 grand
 Imaginations might at all be won.
 And she broke out interpreting my
 thoughts:

"No doubt we seem a kind of
 monster to you;
 We are used to that: for women, up
 till this
 Cramp'd under worse than South-sea
 isle taboo,
 Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
 In high desire, they know not, cannot
 guess
 How much their welfare is a passion
 to us.
 If we could give them surer, quicker
 proof —
 Oh if our end were less achievable
 By slow approaches, than by single
 act
 Of immolation, any phase of death,
 We were as prompt to spring against
 the pikes,
 Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
 To compass our dear sisters' lib-
 erties."

She bow'd as if to vail a noble
 tear;
 And up we came to where the river
 sloped
 To plunge in cataract, shattering on
 black blocks
 A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook
 the woods,
 And danced the color, and, below,
 stuck out
 The bones of some vast bulk that
 lived and roar'd
 Before man was. She gazed awhile
 and said,
 "As these rude bones to us, are we to
 her
 That will be." "Dare we dream of
 that," I ask'd,
 "Which wrought us, as the workman
 and his work,
 That practice betters?" "How," she
 cried, "you love
 The metaphysics! read and earn
 our prize,
 A golden brooch: beneath an emerald
 plane
 Sits Diotima, teaching him that died

Of hemlock; our device; wrought to
 the life;
 She rapt upon her subject, he on her:
 For there are schools for all." "And
 yet" I said
 "Methinks I have not found among
 them all
 One anatomic." "Nay, we thought
 of that,"
 She answer'd, "but it pleased us not:
 in truth
 We shudder but to dream our maids
 should ape
 Those monstrous males that carve
 the living hound,
 And cram him with the fragments of
 the grave,
 Or in the dark dissolving human
 heart,
 And holy secrets of this microcosm,
 Dabbling a shameless hand with
 shameful jest,
 Encarnalize their spirits: yet we
 know
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this
 matter hangs:
 Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,
 Nor willing men should come among
 us, learnt,
 For many weary moons before we
 came,
 This craft of healing. Were you
 sick, ourself
 Would tend upon you. To your
 question now,
 Which touches on the workman and
 his work.
 Let there be light and there was
 light: 'tis so:
 For was, and is, and will be, are but is;
 And all creation is one act at once,
 The birth of light: but we that are
 not all,
 As parts, can see but parts, now this,
 now that,
 And live, perforce, from thought to
 thought, and make
 One act a phantom of succession:
 thus
 Our weakness somehow shapes the
 shadow, Time;
 But in the shadow will we work, and
 mould
 The woman to the fuller day."

She spake

With kindled eyes: we rode a league
 beyond,
 And, o'er a bridge of pinewood cross-
 ing, came
 On flowery levels underneath the crag,
 Full of all beauty. "O how sweet"
 I said
 (For I was half-oblivious of my mask)
 "To linger here with one that loved
 us." "Yea,"

She answer'd, "or with fair philoso-
 phies
 That lift the fancy; for indeed these
 fields
 Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian
 lawns,
 Where paced the Demigods of old,
 and saw
 The soft white vapor streak the
 crowned towers
 Built to the Sun:" then, turning to
 her maids,
 "Pitch our pavilion here upon the
 sward;
 Lay out the viands." At the word,
 they raised
 A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
 With fair Corinna's triumph; here
 she stood,
 Engirt with many a florid maiden-
 cheek,
 The woman conqueror; woman-con-
 quer'd there
 The bearded Victor of ten-thousand
 hymns,
 And all the men mourn'd at his side:
 but we
 Set forth to climb; then, climbing,
 Cyril kept
 With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
 With mine affianced. Many a little
 hand
 Glanced like a touch of sunshine on
 the rocks,
 Many a light foot shone like a jewel
 set
 In the dark crag: and then we turn'd,
 we wound
 About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
 Hammering and clinking, chattering
 stony names
 Of shale and hornblende, rag and
 trap and tuff,
 Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
 Grew broader toward his death and
 fell, and all
 The rosy heights came out above the
 lawns.

IV.

The splendor falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story:
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
 dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going!
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfdand faintly blowing!
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
 dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river:
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
 And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
dying.

"There sinks the nebulous star we
call the Sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound."
Said Ida; "let us down and rest;"
and we

Down from the lean and wrinkled
precipices,
By every coppice-feather'd chasm and
cleft,
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to
where below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone
the tent



*"The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story."*

Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she
lean'd on me,
Descending; once or twice she lent
her hand,
And blissful palpitations in the blood,
Stirring a sudden transport rose and
fell.

But when we planted level feet,
and dipt
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd
in,
There leaning deep in broider'd down
we sank
Our elbows: on a tripod in the midst

A fragrant flame rose, and before us
glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine,
and gold.

Then she, "Let some one sing to
us: lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music:"
and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp,
and sang.

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,

In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

"Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the under-
world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

"Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer
dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering
square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

"Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more."

She ended with such passion that
the tear,
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring
pearl
Lost in her bosom: but with some
disdain
Answer'd the Princess, "If indeed
there haunt
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to
men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears
with wool
And so pace by: but thine are fancies
hatch'd
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,



*"In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more."*

But trim our sails, and let old by-gones
be,
While down the streams that float us
each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering
bergs of ice,
Throne after throne, and molten on
the waste
Becomes a cloud: for all things serve
their time
Toward that great year of equal
mights and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in
the end
Found golden: let the past be past;
let be
Their cancell'd Babels: tho' the rough
kex break

The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-
blown goat
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-
tree split
Their monstrous idols, care not while
we hear
A trumpet in the distance pealing
news
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle,
burns
Above the unrisen morrow:" then to
me;
"Know you no song of your own land,"
she said,
"Not such as moans about the retro-
spect,
But deals with the other distance and
the hues

Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine."

Then I remember'd one myself had made,
What time I watch'd the swallow winging south
From mine own land, part made long since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

"O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

"O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow,
and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

"O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

"Why lingereth she to clothe her heart
with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are
green?

"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is
flown:
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

"O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make
her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at
each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old
time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd
with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for
still my voice
Rang false; but smiling "Not for
thee," she said,
"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,
rather, maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-
crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass;
and this
A mere love-poem! O for such, my
friend,
We hold them slight: they mind us of
the time
When we made bricks in Egypt.
Knaves are men,

That lute and flute fantastic tender-
ness,

And dress the victim to the offering up.
And paint the gates of Hell with Par-
adise,

And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;
She wept her true eyes blind for such
a one,

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She
is dead.

So they blaspheme the muse! But
great is song

Used to great ends: ourself have often
tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm
have dash'd

The passion of the prophetess; for song
Is due unto freedom, force and growth
Of spirit than to junketing and love.
Love is it? Would this same mock-
love, and this

Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter
bats,

Till all men grew to rate us at our
worth,

Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills,
and sphered

Whole in ourselves and owed to none.
Enough!

But now to leaven play with profit,
you,

Know you no song, the true growth of
your soil,

That gives the manners of your coun-
try-women?

She spoke and turn'd her sumptu-
ous head with eyes

Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for
such a song,

Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd
glass had wrought,

Or master'd by the sense of sport, be-
gan

To troll a careless, careless tavern-
catch

Of Moll and Meg, and strange experi-
ences

Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded
at him,

I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wann'd
and shook;

The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;
"Forbear," the Princess cried; "For-
bear, Sir," I;

And heated thro' and thro' with wrath
and love,

I smote him on the breast; he started
up;

There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
Melissa clamor'd "Flee the death;"

"To horse,"

Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and
 fled, as flies
 A troop of snowy doves athwart the
 dusk,
 When some one batters at the dove-
 cote-doors,
 Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
 With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at
 heart,
 In the pavilion: there like parting
 hopes
 I heard them passing from me: hoof
 by hoof,
 And every hoof a knell to my desires,
 Clang'd on the bridge; and then an-
 other shriek,
 "The Head, the Head, the Princess, O
 the Head!"
 For blind with rage she miss'd the
 plank, and roll'd
 In the river. Out I sprang from glow
 to gloom:
 There whirl'd her white robe like a
 blossom'd branch
 Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I
 gave,
 No more; but woman-vested as I was
 Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I
 caught her; then
 Oaring one arm, and bearing in my
 left
 The weight of all the hopes of half
 the world,
 Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
 Was half-disrooted from his place and
 stoop'd
 To drench his dark locks in the gur-
 gling wave
 Mid-channel. Right on this we drove
 and caught,
 And grasping down the boughs I
 gain'd the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmer-
 ingly group'd
 In the hollow bank. One reaching
 forward drew
 My burthen from mine arms; they
 cried "she lives:"
 They bore her back into the tent: but
 I,
 So much a kind of shame within me
 wrought,
 Not yet endured to meet her opening
 eyes,
 Nor found my friends; but push'd
 alone on foot
 (For since her horse was lost I left
 her mine)
 Across the woods, and less from
 Indian craft
 Than beelike instinct hiveward, found
 at length
 The garden portals. Two great
 statues, Art
 And Science, Caryatids lifted up

A weight of emblem, and betwixt were
 valves
 Of open-work in which the hunter
 rued
 His rash intrusion, manlike, but his
 brows
 Had sprouted, and the branches there-
 upon
 Spread out at top, and grimly spiked
 the gates.

A little space was left between the
 horns,
 Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top
 with pain,
 Dropt on the sward, and up the linden
 walks,
 And, tost on thoughts that changed
 from hue to hue,
 Now poring on the glowworm, now
 the star,
 I paced the terrace, till the Bear had
 wheel'd
 Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
 Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
 Than female, moving thro' the uncer-
 tain gloom,
 Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this
 were she,"
 But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist,"
 he said,
 "They seek us: out so late is out of
 rules.
 Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the
 cry.
 How came you here?" I told him:
 "I" said he,
 "Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
 To whom none spake, half-sick at
 heart, return'd.
 Arriving all confused among the rest
 With hooded brows I crept into the
 hall,
 And, couch'd behind a Judith, under-
 neath
 The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last
 of all,
 Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
 She, question'd if she knew us men,
 at first
 Was silent; closer prest, denied it
 not:
 And then, demanded if her mother
 knew,
 Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or de-
 nied:
 From whence the Royal mind, famil-
 iar with her,
 Easily gather'd either guilt. She
 sent
 For Psyche, but she was not there;
 she call'd

For Psyche's child to cast it from
the doors,
She sent for Blanche to accuse her
face to face;
And I slipt out: but whither will you
now?
And where are Psyche, Cyril? both
are fled.
What, if together? that were not so
well.
Would rather we had never come! I
dread
His wildness, and the chances of the
dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him
more than I
That struck him this is proper to the
clown,
Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled,
still the clown,
To harm the thing that trusts him,
and to shame
That which he says he loves for
Cyril, howe'er
He deal in frolic, as to-night—the
song
Might have been worse and sinn'd in
grosser lips
Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold
These flashes on the surface are not
he.
He has a solid base of temperament.
But as the waterlily starts and slides
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is
he."

Scarce had I ceased when from a
tamarisk near
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,
"Names:"
He, standing still, was clutch'd; but
I began
To thrid the musky-circled mazes,
wind
And double in and out the boles, and
race
By all the fountains: fleet I was of
foot:
Before me shower'd the rose in flakes;
behind
I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine
ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded
not,
And secret laughter tickled all my
soul.
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,
And falling on my face was caught
and known.

They haled us to the Princess
where she sat
High in the hall: above her droop'd
a lamp,

And made the single jewel on her
brow
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-
head,
Prophet of storm: a handmaid on
each side
Bow'd toward her, combing out her
long black hair
Damp from the river; and close be-
hind her stood
Eight daughters of the plough,
stronger than men,
Huge women blowzed with health,
and wind, and rain,
And labor. Each was like a Druid
rock;
Or like a spire of land that stands
apart
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about
with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd divid-
ing clove
An advent to the throne: and there-
beside,
Half-naked as if caught at once from
bed
And tumbled on the purple footcloth,
lay
The lily-shining child; and on the
left,
Bow'd on her palms and folded up
from wrong,
Her round white shoulder shaken with
her sobs,
Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche
erect
Stood up and spake, an affluent
orator.

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old
days:
You prized my counsel, lived upon
my lips:
I led you then to all the Castalies;
I fed you with the milk of every
Muse;
I loved you like this kneeler, and you
me
Your second mother: those were
gracious times.
Then came your new friend: you
began to change—
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and
to cool;
Till taken with her seeming openness
You turn'd your warmer currents all
to her,
To me you froze: this was my meed
for all.
Yet I bore up in part from ancient
love,
And partly that I hoped to win you
back,
And partly conscious of my own
deserts,

And partly that you were my civil
head,
And chiefly you were born for some-
thing great,
In which I might your fellow-worker
be,
When time should serve; and thus a
noble scheme
Grew up from seed we two long since
had sown;
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's
gourd,
Up in one night and due to sudden
sun:
We took this palace; but even from
the first
You stood in your own light and
darken'd mine.
What student came but that you
planned her path
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
A foreigner, and I your country-
woman,
I your old friend and tried, she new
in all?
But still her lists were swell'd and
mine were lean;
Yet I bore up in hope she would be
known:
Then came these wolves: *they* knew
her: *they* endured,
Long-closeted with her the yester-
morn,
To tell her what they were, and she
to hear:
And me none told: not less to an eye
like mine
A lidless watcher of the public weal,
Last night, their mask was patent,
and my foot
Was to you: but I thought again: I
fear'd
To meet a cold 'We thank you, we
shall hear of it
From Lady Psyche:' you had gone
to her,
She told, perforce; and winning easy
grace,
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd
among us
In our young nursery still unknown,
the stem
Less grain than touchwood, while my
honest heat
Were all miscounted as malignant
haste
To push my rival out of place and
power.
But public use required she should be
known;
And since my oath was ta'en for
public use,
I broke the letter of it to keep the
sense.
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd
them well,

Saw that they kept apart, no mischief
done;
And yet this day (tho' you should
hate me for it)
I came to tell you; found that you
had gone,
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now,
I thought,
That surely she will speak; if not,
then I:
Did she? These monsters blazon'd
what they were,
According to the coarseness of their
kind,
For thus I hear; and known at last
(my work)
And full of cowardice and guilty
shame,
I grant in her some sense of shame,
she flies;
And I remain on whom to wreak
your rage,
I, that have lent my life to build up
yours,
I that have wasted here health, wealth,
and time,
And talent, I — you know it — I will
not boast:
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,
Divorced from my experience, will be
chaff
For every gust of chance, and men
will say
We did not know the real light, but
chased
The wisp that flickers where no foot
can tread."

She ceased: the Princess answer'd
coldly, "Good:
Your oath is broken: we dismiss you:
go.
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the
child)
Our mind is changed: we take it to
ourselves."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vul-
ture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard
smile.
"The plan was mine. I built the
nest" she said
"To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!" and
stoop'd to updrag
Melissa: she, half on her mother's propt,
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her
face, and cast
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
Which melted Florian's fancy as she
hung,
A Niobéan daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven;
and while
We gazed upon her came a little stir

About the doors, and on a sudden
 rush'd
 Among us, out of breath, as one pur-
 sued,
 A woman-post in flying raiment.
 Fear
 Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her
 face, and wing'd
 Her transit to the throne, whereby she
 fell
 Delivering seal'd dispatches which
 the Head
 Took half-amazed, and in her lion's
 mood
 Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
 Regarding, while she read, till over
 brow
 And cheek and bosom brake the
 wrathful bloom
 As of some fire against a stormy
 cloud,
 When the wild peasant rights him-
 self, the rick
 Flames, and his anger reddens in the
 heavens;
 For anger most it seem'd, while now
 her breast,
 Beaten with some great passion at
 her heart,
 Palpitated, her hand shook, and we
 heard
 In the dead hush the papers that she
 held
 Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her
 feet
 Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
 The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire;
 she crush'd
 The scrolls together, made a sudden
 turn
 As if to speak, but, utterance failing
 her,
 She whirl'd them on to me, as who
 should say
 "Read," and I read—two letters—
 one her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the
 Prince your way
 We knew not your ungracious laws,
 which learnt,
 We, conscious of what temper you
 are built,
 Came all in haste to hinder wrong,
 but fell
 Into his father's hands, who has this
 night,
 You lying close upon his territory,
 Slipt round and in the dark invested
 you,
 And here he keeps me hostage for his
 son."

The second was my father's running
 thus:

"You have our son: touch not a hair
 of his head:
 Render him up unscathed: give him
 your hand:
 Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed
 we hear
 You hold the woman is the better
 man;
 A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
 Would make all women kick against
 their Lords
 Thro' all the world, and which might
 well deserve
 That we this night should pluck your
 palace down;
 And we will do it, unless you send us
 back
 Our son, on the instant, whole."
 So far I read;
 And then stood up and spoke impetu-
 ously.

"O not to pry and peer on your
 reserve,
 But led by golden wishes, and a hope
 The child of regal compact, did I
 break
 Your precinct; not a scorner of your
 sex
 But venerator, zealous it should be
 All that it might be: hear me, for I
 bear,
 Tho' man, yet human, whatsoever
 your wrongs,
 From the flaxen curl to the gray lock
 a life
 Less mine than yours: my nurse
 would tell me of you;
 I babbled for you, as babies for the
 moon,
 Vague brightness; when a boy, you
 stoop'd to me
 From all high places, lived in all fair
 P' lights,
 Came in long breezes rapt from in-
 most south
 And blown to inmost north; at eve
 and dawn
 With Ida, Ida, rang the woods;
 The leader wildswan in among the
 stars
 Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths
 of glowworm light
 The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida.
 Now,
 Because I would have reach'd you,
 had you been
 Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the
 enthroned
 Persephonè in Hades, now at length,
 Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
 A man I came to see you: but, indeed,
 Not in this frequency can I lend full
 tongue,
 O noble Ida, to those thoughts that
 wait

On you, their centre: let me say but
 this,
 That many a famous man and woman,
 town
 And landskip, have I heard of, after
 seen
 The dwarfs of presage: tho' when
 known, there grew
 Another kind of beauty in detail
 Made them worth knowing; but in
 you I found
 My boyish dream involved and daz-
 zled down
 And master'd, while that after-beauty
 makes
 Such head from act to act, from hour
 to hour,
 Within me, that except you slay me
 here,
 According to your bitter statute-book,
 I cannot cease to follow you, as they say
 The seal does music; who desire you
 more
 Than growing boys their manhood;
 dying lips,
 With many thousand matters left to
 do,
 The breath of life; O more than poor
 men wealth,
 Than sick men health — yours, yours,
 not mine — but half
 Without you; with you, whole; and
 of those halves
 You worthiest; and howe'er you block
 and bar
 Your heart with system out from mine,
 I hold
 That it becomes no man to nurse
 despair,
 But in the teeth of clench'd antago-
 nisms
 To follow up the worthiest till he die:
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized
 Behold your father's letter."

On one knee
 Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,
 and dash'd
 Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her
 lips,
 As waits a river level with the dam
 Ready to burst and flood the world
 with foam:
 And so she would have spoken, but
 there rose
 A hubbub in the court of half the
 maids
 Gather'd together: from the illumined
 hall
 Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a
 press
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded
 ewes,
 And rainbow robes, and gems and
 gemlike eyes,

And gold and golden heads; they to
 and fro
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some
 red, some pale,
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the
 light,
 Some crying there was an army in the
 land,
 And some that men were in the very
 walls,
 And some they cared not; till a
 clamor grew
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-
 built,
 And worse-confounded: high above
 them stood
 The placid marble Muses, looking
 peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head:
 but rising up
 Robed in the long night of her deep
 hair, so
 To the open window moved, remaining
 there
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the
 waves
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling
 eye
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the
 light
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd
 her arms and call'd
 Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye, brawlers? am not
 I your Head?
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks:
 I dare
 Ail these male thunderbolts: what is
 it ye fear?
 Peace! there are those to avenge us
 and they come:
 If not, — myself were like enough, O
 girls,
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our
 rights,
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of
 war,
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
 Die: yet I blame you not so much for
 fear;
 Six thousand years of fear have made
 you that
 From which I would redeem you: but
 for those
 That stir this hubbub — you and you
 — I know
 Your faces there in the crowd — to-
 morrow morn
 We hold a great convention: then
 shall they
 That love their voices more than duty,
 learn
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in
 shame to live

No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,
For ever slaves at home and fools abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands:
thereat the crowd
Muttering, dissolved: then with a smile, that look'd
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the gleans are drown'd in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and said:

"You have done well and like a gentleman,
And like a prince: you have our thanks for all:
And you look well too in your woman's dress:
Well have you done and like a gentleman.
You saved our life: we owe you bitter thanks:
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood—
Then men had said—but now—What hinders me
To take such bloody vengeance on you both?—
Yet since our father—Wasps in our good hive,
You would-be quenchers of the light to be,
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears—
O would I had his sceptre for one hour!
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd
Our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us—
I wed with thee! I bound by precontract
Your bride, your bonds-lave! not tho' all the gold
That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown,
And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us:
I trample on your offers and on you:

Begone: we will not look upon you more.

Here, push them out at gates."

In wrath she spake.
Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough
Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd
Their motion: twice I sought to plead my cause,
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,
The weight of destiny: so from her face
They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,
And with grim laughter thrust us out at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard
The voices murmuring. While I listen'd, came
On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt:
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts;
The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard,
The jest and earnest working side by side,
The cataract and the tumult and the kings
Were shadows; and the long fantastic night
With all its doings had and had not been,
And all things were and were not.

This went by
As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy;
Not long; I shook it off; for spite of doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang: we thought her half-possess'd,
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words;

And, after, feigning pique at what she
call'd
The raillery, or grotesque, or false
sublime—
Like one that wishes at a dance to
change
The music—clapt her hands and
cried for war,
Or some grand fight to kill and make
an end:
And he that next inherited the tale
Half turning to the broken statue, said,
"Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I
prove
Your knight, and fight your battle,
what for me?"
It chanced, her empty glove upon the
tomb
Lay by her like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. "Fight,"
she said,
"And make us all we would be, great
and good."
He knightlike in his cap instead of
casque,
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favor, and assumed the
Prince.

v.

Now, scarce three paces measured
from the mound,
We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And "Stand, who goes?" "Two
from the palace" I.
"The second two: they wait," he said,
"pass on;
His Highness wakes:" and one, that
clash'd in arms,
By glimmering lanes and walls of
canvass led
Threading the soldier-city, till we
heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign
shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial
tent
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and
seem'd to hear,
As in a poplar grove when a light
wind wakes
A lisp of the innumerable leaf and
dies,
Each hissing in his neighbor's ear;
and then
A strangled titter, out of which there
brake
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to
death,
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two
old kings
Began to wag their baldness up and
down,

The fresh young captains flash'd their
glittering teeth,
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved
and blew,
And slain with laughter roll'd the
gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek
wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides "King, you
are free!
We did but keep you surety for our
son,
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,
thou,
That tends her bristled grunterns in
the sludge:"
For I was drench'd with ooze, and
torn with briers,
More crumpled than a poppy from the
sheath,
And all one rag, disprinc'd from head
to heel.
Then some one sent beneath his
vaulted palm
A whisper'd jest to some one near
him, "Look,
He has been among his shadows."
"Satan take
The old women and their shadows!
(thus the King
Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight
with men.
Go: Cyril told us all."

As boys that slink
From ferule and the trespass-chiding
eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-
slough
To sheathing splendors and the golden
scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that
now
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the
Earth,
And hit the Northern hills. Here
Cyril met us.
A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd
and given
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,
whereon
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled
away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the
night
Had came on Psyche weeping: "then
we fell
Into your father's hand, and there she
lies,
But will not speak, nor stir."
He show'd a tent
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and
there

Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,
 Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,
 Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,
 And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,
 All her fair length upon the ground she lay:
 And at her head a follower of the camp,
 A charr'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,
 Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he whisper'd to her,
 "Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie not thus.
 What have you done but right? you could not slay
 Me, nor your prince: look up: be comforted:
 Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,
 When fallen in darker ways." And likewise I:
 "Be comforted: have I not lost her too,
 In whose least act abides the nameless charm
 That none has else for me?" She heard, she moved,
 She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat,
 And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth
 As those that mourn half-shrouded over death
 In deathless marble. "Her," she said, "my friend—
 Parted from her—betray'd her cause and mine—
 Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith?
 O base and bad! what comfort? none for me!"
 To whom remorseful Cyril, "Yet I pray
 Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child!"
 At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,
 My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more!
 For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
 And either she will die from want of care,
 Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
 The child is hers—for every little fault,

The child is hers; and they will beat my girl
 Remembering her mother: O my flower!
 Or they will take her, they will make her hard,
 And she will pass me by in after-life
 With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.
 Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
 To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,
 The horror of the shame among them all:
 But I will go and sit beside the doors,
 And make a wild petition night and day,
 Until they hate to hear me like a wind
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
 And lay my little blossom at my feet,
 My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child:
 And I will take her up and go my way,
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her:
 Ah! what might that man not deserve of me
 Who gave me back my child?" "Be comforted,"
 Said Cyril, "you shall have it:" but again
 She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank, and so
 Like tender things that being caught feign death,
 Spoke not, nor stir'd.

By this a murmur ran
 Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts
 With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.
 We left her by the woman, and without
 Found the gray kings at parle: and "Look you" cried
 My father "that our compact be fulfill'd:
 You have spoilt this child; she laughs at you and man:
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him:
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire;
 She yields, or war."

Then Gama turn'd to me:
 "We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
 With our strange girl: and yet they say that still
 You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large:
 How say you, war or not?"
 "Not war, if possible,
 O king," I said, "lest from the abuse of war,
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,

The smouldering homestead, and the
household flower
Torn from the lintel — all the com-
mon wrong —
A smoke go up thro' which I loom to
her
Three times a monster: now she
lightens scorn
At him that mars her plan, but then
would hate
(And every voice she talk'd with
ratify it,
And every face she look'd on justify it)
The general foe. — More soluble is this
knot,
By gentleness than war. I want her
love.
What were I nigher this altho' we
dash'd
Your cities into shards with catapults,
She would not love; — or brought her
chain'd, a slave,
The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,
Not ever would she love; but brood-
ing turn
The book of scorn, till all my flitting
chance
Were caught within the record of her
wrongs,
And crush'd to death: and rather,
Sire, than this
I would the old God of war himself
were dead,
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs
of wreck,
Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd
in ice,
Not to be molten out."
And roughly spake
My father, "Tut, you know them not,
the girls.
Boy, when I hear you prate I almost
think
That idiot legend credible. Look you,
Sir!
Man is the hunter; woman is his
game:
The sleek and shining creatures of the
chase,
We hunt them for the beauty of their
skins;
They love us for it, and we ride them
down.
Wheedling and siding with them!
Out! for shame!
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear
to them
As he that does the thing they dare
not do,
Breathing and sounding beauteous
battle, comes
With the air of the trumpet round
him, and leaps in
Among the women, snares them by
the score

Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho'
dash'd with death
He reddens what he kisses: thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good
wife,
Worth winning; but this firebrand —
gentleness
To such as her! if Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it."
"Yea but Sire," I cried,
"Wild natures need wise curbs. The
soldier? No:
What dares not Ida do that she should
prize
The soldier? I beheld her, when she
rose
The yesternight, and storming in ex-
tremes,
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance
down
Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd
the death,
No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her,
king,
True woman: but you clash them all
in one,
That have as many differences as
we.
The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm: one loves the sol-
dier, one
The silken priest of peace, one this,
one that,
And some unworthily; their sinless
faith,
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr; whence
they need
More breadth of culture: is not Ida
right?
They worth it? truer to the law with-
in?
Severer in the logic of a life?
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences
Of earth and heaven? and she of
whom you speak,
My mother, looks as whole as some
serene
Creation minted in the golden moods
Of sovereign artists; not a thought,
a touch,
But pure as lines of green that streak
the white
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves;
I say,
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,
Bursts of great heart and slips in
sensual mire,
But whole and one: and take them
all-in-all,
Were we ourselves but half as good,
as kind,
As truthful, much that Ida claims as
right

Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly
 theirs
 As dues of Nature. To our point:
 not war:
 Lest I lose all."

"Nay, nay, you spake but sense,"
 Said Gama. "We remember love
 ourself

In our sweet youth; we did not rate
 him then

This red-hot iron to be shaped with
 blows.

You talk almost like Ida: *she* can talk;
 And there is something in it as you
 say:

But you talk kindlier: we esteem you
 for it. —

He seems a gracious and a gallant
 Prince,

I would he had our daughter: for the
 rest,

Our own detention, why, the causes
 weigh'd,

Fatherly fears—you used us cour-
 teously —

We would do much to gratify your
 Prince—

We pardon it; and for your ingress
 here

Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair
 land,

You did but come as goblins in the
 night,

Nor in the furrow broke the plough-
 man's head,

Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the
 milking-maid,

Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of
 cream:

But let your Prince (our royal word
 upon it,

He comes back safe) ride with us to
 our lines,

And speak with Arac: Arac's word
 is thrice

As ours with Ida: something may be
 done —

I know not what — and ours shall see
 us friends.

You, likewise, our late guests, if so
 you will,

Follow us: who knows? we four may
 build some plan

Foursquare to opposition."

Here he reach'd
 White hands of farewell to my sire,
 who growl'd

An answer which, half-muffled in his
 beard,

Let so much out as gave us leave to
 go.

Then rode we with the old king
 across the lawns

Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings
 of Spring

In every bole, a song on every spray
 Of birds that piped their Valentines,
 and woke

Desire in me to infuse my tale of
 love

In the old king's ears, who promised
 help, and oozed

All o'er with honey'd answer as we
 rode

And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy
 dew

Gather'd by night and peace, with
 each light air

On our mail'd heads: but other
 thoughts than Peace

Burnt in us, when we saw the em-
 battled squares,

And squadrons of the Prince, tramp-
 ling the flowers

With clamor: for among them rose a
 cry

As if to greet the king; they made a
 halt;

The horses yell'd; they clash'd their
 arms; the drum

Beat; merrily-blowing shrill'd the
 martial fife;

And in the blast and bray of the long
 horn

And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
 The banner: anon to meet us lightly

pranced
 Three captains out; nor ever had I
 seen

Such thews of men: the midmost and
 the highest

Was Arac: all about his motion
 clung

The shadow of his sister, as the beam
 Of the East, that play'd upon them,

made them glance
 Like those three stars of the airy
 Giant's zone,

That glitter burnish'd by the frosty
 dark;

And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
 And bickers into red and emerald,

shone
 Their morions, wash'd with morning,
 as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first
 I heard

War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of
 of force,

Whose home is in the sinews of a
 man,

Stir in me as to strike: then took the
 king

His three broad sons; with now a
 wandering hand

And now a pointed finger, told them all:
 A common light of smiles at our dis-
 guise

Broke from their lips, and, ere the
 windy jest

Had labor'd down within his ample
lungs,
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in
words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he
himself
Your captive, yet my father wills not
war:

And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I,
war or no?

But then this question of your troth
remains:

And there's a downright honest mean-
ing in her;

She flies too high, she flies too high!
and yet

She ask'd but space and fairplay for
her scheme;

She prest and prest it on me — I my-
self,

What know I of these things? but,
life and soul!

I thought her half-right talking of her
wrongs;

I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what
of that?

I take her for the flower of woman-
kind,

And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those
she loves,

And, right or wrong, I care not: this
is all,

I stand upon her side: she made me
swear it —

'Sdeath — and with solemn rites by
candlelight —

Swear by St. something — I forget
her name —

Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest
men;

She was a princess too; and so I
swore.

Come, this is all; she will not: waive
your claim:

If not, the foughten field, what else,
at once

Decides it, 'sdeath! against my
father's will."

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up
My precontract, and loth by brainless
war

To cleave the rift of difference deeper
yet;

Till one of those two brothers, half
aside

And fingering at the hair about his
lip,

To prick us on to combat "Like to
like!

The woman's garment hid the
woman's heart."

A taunt that clench'd his purpose
like a blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-
scoff,

And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon
the point

Where idle boys are cowards to their
shame,

"Decide it here: why not? we are
three to three."

Then spake the third "But three to
three? no more?

No more, and in our noble sister's
cause?

More, more, for honor: every captain
waits

Hungry for honor, angry for his king:
More, more, some fifty on a side, that
each

May breathe himself, and quick! by
overthrow

Of these or those, the question set-
tled die."

"Yea," answer'd I, "for this wild
wreath of air,

This flake of rainbow flying on the
highest

Foam of men's deeds — this honor, if
ye will.

It needs must be for honor if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fail, we
fail,

And if we win, we fail: she would not
keep

Her compact." "Sdeath! but we
will send to her,"

Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she
should

Bide by this issue: let our missive thro',
And you shall have her answer by
the word."

"Boys!" shriek'd the old king, but
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool;
for none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more
to say:

Back rode we to my father's camp,
and found

He thrice had sent a herald to the
gates,

To learn if Ida yet would cede our
claim,

Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life: three
times he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd
him thence:

The third, and those eight daughters
 of the plough
 Came sallying thro' the gates, and
 caught his hair,
 And so belabor'd him on rib and
 cheek
 They made him wild: not less one
 glance he caught
 Thro' open doors of Ida station'd
 there
 Unshaken, clinging to her purpose,
 firm
 Tho' compass'd by two armies and
 the noise
 Of arms; and standing like a stately
 Pine
 Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
 When storm is on the heights, and
 right and left
 Suck'd from the dark heart of the
 long hills roll
 The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and
 yet her will
 Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I
 was pledged
 To fight in tourney for my bride, he
 clash'd
 His iron palms together with a cry;
 Himself would tilt it out among the
 lads:
 But overborne by all his bearded
 lords
 With reasons drawn from age and
 state, perforce
 He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce
 demur:
 And many a bold knight started up in
 heat,
 And sware to combat for my claim
 till death.

All on this side the palace ran the
 field
 Flat to the garden-wall: and likewise
 here,
 Above the garden's glowing blossom-
 belts,
 A column'd entry shone and marble
 stairs,
 And great bronze valves, emboss'd
 with Tomyris
 And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
 But now fast barr'd: so here upon
 the flat
 All that long morn the lists were
 hammer'd up,
 And all that morn the heralds to and
 fro,
 With message and defiance, went and
 came;
 Last, Ida's answer, in royal hand,
 But shaken here and there, and rol-
 ling words
 Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

"O brother, you have known the
 pangs we felt,
 What heats of indignation when we
 heard
 Of those that iron-cramp'd their
 women's feet;
 Of lands in which at the altar the
 poor bride
 Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift
 a scourge;
 Of living hearts that crack within the
 fire
 Where smoulder their dead despots;
 and of those,—
 Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity,
 fling
 Their pretty maids in the running
 flood, and swoops
 The vulture, beak and talon, at the
 heart
 Made for all noble motion: and I saw
 That equal baseness lived in sleeker
 times
 With smoother men: the old leaven
 leaven'd all:
 Millions of throats would bawl for
 civil rights,
 No woman named: therefore I set
 my face
 Against all men, and lived but for
 mine own.
 Far off from men I built a fold for
 them:
 I stored it full of rich memorial:
 I fenced it round with gallant insti-
 tutes,
 And biting laws to scare the beasts
 of prey
 And prosper'd; till a rout of saucy
 boys
 Brake on us at our books, and marr'd
 our peace,
 Mask'd like our maids, blustering I
 know not what
 Of insolence and love, some pretext
 held
 Of baby troth, invalid, since my
 will
 Seal'd not the bond—the striplings!
 —for their sport!—
 I tamed my leopards: shall I not
 tame these?
 Or you? or I? for since you think me
 touch'd
 In honor—what, I would not aught
 of false—
 Is not our cause pure? and whereas I
 know
 Your prowess, Arac, and what
 mother's blood
 You draw from, fight; you failing, I
 abide
 What end soever: fail you will not.
 Still
 Take not his life: he risk'd it for my
 own;

His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you
do,
Fight and fight well; strike and strike
home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards
you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our
cause,
The sole men we shall prize in the
aftertime,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your
statues
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly
brush'd aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time,
And mould a generation strong to
move
With claim on claim from right to
right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's,
know herself;
And Knowledge in our own land
make her free,
And, ever following those two crowned
twins,
Commerce and conquest, shower the
fiery grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that
orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern
morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd
across the rest.
"See that there be no traitors in your
camp:
We seem a nest of traitors—none to
trust
Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-
plague of men!
Almost our maids were better at their
homes,
Than thus man-girled here: indeed I
think
Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she
left:
She shall not have it back: the child
shall grow
To prize the authentic mother of her
mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning: there the tender orphan
hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm
from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world:
farewell."

I ceased; he said, "Stubborn, but
she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-
storms,
And breed up warriors! See now, tho'
yourself

Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to
sloughs
That swallow common sense, the
spindling king,
This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the
woman takes it up,
And topples down the scales; but this
is fixt
As are the roots of earth and base of
all;
Man for the field and woman for the
hearth:
Man for the sword and for the needle
she:
Man with the head and woman with
heart:
Man to command and woman to
obey;
All else confusion. Look you! the
gray mare
Is ill to live with, when her whinny
shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small
goodman
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the
fires of Hell
Mix with his hearth: but you—she's
yet a colt—
Take, break her: strongly groom'd and
straitly curb'd
She might not rank with those detest-
able
That let the bantling scald at home,
and brawl
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs
in the street.
They say she's comely; there's the
fairer chance:
I like her none the less for rating at
her!
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty
brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly.
Boy,
The bearing and training of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king:
I took my leave, for it was nearly
noon:
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause "take not his
life:"
I mused on that wild morning in the
woods,
And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt
win:"
I thought on all the wrathful king had
said,
And how the strange betrothment
was to end:
Then I remember'd that burnt sor-
cerer's curse

That one should fight with shadows
and should fall;
And like a flash the weird affection
came:
King, camp and college turn'd to hol-
low shows;
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten
ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a
dream:
And ere I woke it was the point of
noon,
The lists were ready. Empanoplied
and plumed
We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet
blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a
land
Of echoes, and a moment, and once
more
The trumpet, and again: at which the
storm
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge
of spears
And riders front to front, until they
closed
In conflict with the crash of shivering
points,
And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream,
I dream'd
Of fighting. On his haunches rose
the steed,
And into fiery splinters leapt the
lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang
the fire.
Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but
kept their seats:
Part roll'd on the earth and rose
again and drew:
Part stumbled mixt with floundering
horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac's side,
and down
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's
flail,
The large blows rain'd, as here and
everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord of the ring-
ing lists,
And all the plain, — brand, mace, and
shaft, and shield —
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil
bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can
this be he
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this
be so,
The mother makes us most — and in
my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-
front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies'
eyes,

And highest, among the statues,
statue-like,
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a
Jael,
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watch-
ing us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but
she
No saint — inexorable — no tender-
ness —
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me
fight,
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I
drave
Among the thickest and bore down a
Prince,
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make
my dream
All that I would. But that large-
moulded man,
His visage all agrin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and, stag-
gering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and
horseman, came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the
drains,
And shadowing down the champaign
till it strikes
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and
cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar
that Earth
Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for
everything
Gave way before him: only Florian, he
That loved me closer than his own
right eye,
Thrust in between; but Arac rode
him down:
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against
the Prince,
With Psyche's color round his helmet,
tough,
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at
arms;
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that
smote
And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt
my veins
Stretch with fierce heat; a moment
hand to hand,
And sword to sword, and horse to
horse we hung,
Till I struck out and shouted; the
blade glanced,
I did but shear a feather, and dream
and truth
Flow'd from me; darkness closed me;
and I fell.

VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:

All her maidens, watching, said,
 "She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior slept
 Took the face-cloth from the face;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee —
 Like summer tempest came her tears —
 "Sweet my child, I live for thee."

My dream had never died or lived
 again.

As in some mystic middle state I lay;
 Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:
 Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me
 all

So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to
 me,
 That all things grew more tragic and
 more strange;



"Like summer tempest came her tears —
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'"

That when our side was vanquish'd
 and my cause
 For ever lost, there went up a great cry,
 The Prince is slain. My father heard
 and ran
 In on the lists, and there unlaced my
 casque

And grovell'd on my body, and after
 him
 Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
 With Psyche's babe in arm: there on
 the roofs

Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: the seed,
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came;
The leaves were wet with women's tears: they heard
A noise of songs they would not understand:
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came,
The woodmen with their axes: lo the tree!
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they struck;
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain:
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder blade.

"Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power: and roll'd
With music in the growing breeze of Time,
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.

"And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken: fear we not
To break them more in their behoof, whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with a day
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three: but come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,
Ill nurses; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender ministries
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the Park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest: by them went
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of light
Slided, they moving under shade: but Blanche
At distance follow'd: so they came: anon
Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stay'd;
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—and prest
Their hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said "You shall not lie in the tents but here,
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,
She past my way. Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd; and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past

A shadow, and her hue changed, and
 she said:
 "He saved my life: my brother slew
 him for it."
 No more: at which the king in bitter
 scorn
 Drew from my neck the painting and
 the tress,
 And held them up: she saw them,
 and a day
 Rose from the distance on her memory,
 When the good Queen, her mother,
 shore the tress
 With kisses, ere the days of Lady
 Blanche:
 And then once more she look'd at my
 pale face
 Till understanding all the foolish
 work
 Of fancy, and the bitter close of all,
 Her iron will was broken in her
 mind;
 Her noble heart was molten in her
 breast,
 She bow'd, she set the child on the
 earth; she laid
 A feeling finger on my brows, and
 presently
 "O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is
 not dead
 O let me have him with my brethren
 here
 In our own palace: we will tend on
 him
 Like one of these: if so, by any
 means,
 To lighten this great clog of thanks,
 that make
 Our progress falter to the woman's
 goal."

She said: but at the happy word
 "he lives"
 My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my
 wounds.
 So those two foes above my fallen life,
 With brow to brow like night and
 evening mixt
 Their dark and gray, while Psyche
 ever stole
 A little nearer, till the babe that by
 us,
 Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden
 brede,
 Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the
 grass,
 Uncared for, spied its mother and
 began
 A blind and babbling laughter, and
 to dance
 Its body, and reach its fatling inno-
 cent arms
 And lazy lingering fingers. She the
 appeal
 Brook'd not, but clamoring out "Mine
 — mine — not yours,

It is not yours, but mine: give me the
 child"
 Ceased all on tremble: piteous was
 the cry:
 So stood the unhappy mother open-
 mouth'd,
 And turn'd each face her way: wan
 was her cheek
 With hollow watch, her blooming
 mantle torn,
 Red grief and mother's hunger in her
 eye,
 And down dead-heavy sank her curls,
 and half
 The sacred mother's bosom, panting,
 burst
 The laces toward her babe; but she
 nor cared
 Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida
 heard,
 Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,
 stood
 Erect and silent, striking with her
 glance
 The mother, me, the child; but he
 that lay
 Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
 Trail'd himself up on one knee: then
 he drew
 Her robe to meet his lips, and down
 she look'd
 At the arm'd man sideways, pitying
 as it seem'd,
 Or self-involved; but when she learnt
 his face,
 Remembering his ill-omen'd song,
 arose
 Once more thro' all her height, and
 o'er him grew
 Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
 When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and
 he said:

"O fair and strong and terrible!
 Lioness
 That with your long locks play the
 Lion's mane!
 But Love and Nature, these are two
 more terrible
 And stronger. See, your foot is on
 our necks,
 We vanquish'd, you the Victor of
 your will.
 What would you more? give her the
 child! remain
 Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
 Or all as dead: henceforth we let you
 be:
 Win you the hearts of women; and
 beware
 Lest, where you seek the common
 love of these,
 The common hate with the revolving
 wheel
 Should drag you down, and some
 great Nemesis

Break from a darken'd future, crown'd
with fire,
And tread you out for ever: but how-
soe'er
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own
arms
To hold your own, deny not hers to
her,
Give her the child! O if, I say, you
keep
One pulse that beats true woman, if
you loved
The breast that fed or arm that dan-
dled you,
Or own one port of sense not flint to
prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn
to lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately claspt
with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest, her
one fault
The tenderness, not yours, that could
not kill,
Give me it: *I will give it her.*"

He said:

At first her eye with slow dilation
roll'd
Dry flame, she listening; after sank
and sank
And, into mournful twilight mellow-
ing, dwelt
Full on the child; she took it:
"Pretty bud!
Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of
the woods!
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when
a world
Of traitorous friend and broken sys-
tem made
No purple in the distance, mystery,
Pledge of a love not to be mine,
farewell;
These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part: and yet how fain
was I
To dream thy cause embraced in
mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I
felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren
breast
In the dead prime: but may thy
mother prove
As true to thee as false, false, false to
me!
And, if thou needs must bear the
yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom" — here she kiss'd
it: then —
"All good go with thee! take it, Sir,"
and so
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed
hands,
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as
she sprang

To meet it, with an eye that swum in
thanks;
Then felt it sound and whole from
head to foot,
And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close
enough,
And in her hunger mouth'd and mum-
bled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm and added suppli-
antly:

"We two were friends: I go to
mine own land
For ever: find some other: as for me
I scarce am fit for your great plans:
yet speak to me,
Say one soft word and let me part
forgiven."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the
child.
Then Arac. "Ida — 'sdeath! you
blame the man;
You wrong yourselves — the woman
is so hard
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to
me!
I am your warrior: I and mine have
fought
Your battle: kiss her; take her hand,
she weeps:
'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice
o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the
ground,
And reddening in the furrows of his
chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama
said:

"I've heard that there is iron in the
blood,
And I believe it. Not one word? not
one?
Whence drew you this steel temper?
not from me,
Not from your mother, now a saint
with saints.
She said you had a heart — I heard
her say it —
'Our Ida has a heart' — just ere she
died —
'But see that some one with authority
Be near her still' and I — I sought
for one —
All people said she had authority —
The Lady Blanche: much profit!
Not one word;
No! tho' your father sues: see how
you stand
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good
knights maim'd,
I trust that there is no one hurt to
death,

For your wild whim: and was it then
 for this,
 Was it for this we gave our palace up,
 Where we withdrew from summer
 heats and state,
 And had our wine and chess beneath
 the planes,
 And many a pleasant hour with her
 that's gone,
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it
 kind?
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of
 whom,
 When first she came, all flush'd you
 said to me
 Now had you got a friend of your
 own age,
 Now could you share your thought;
 now should men see
 Two women faster welded in one
 love
 Than pairs of wedlock; she you
 walk'd with, she
 You talk'd with, whole nights long, up
 in the tower,
 Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
 And right ascension, Heaven knows
 what; and now
 A word, but one, one little kindly word,
 Not one to spare her: out upon you,
 flint!
 You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,
 You shame your mother's judgment
 too. Not one?
 You will not? well—no heart have
 you, or such
 As fancies like the vermin in a nut
 Have fretted all to dust and bitter-
 ness."
 So said the small king moved beyond
 his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of
 her force
 By many a varying influence and so
 long.
 Down thro' her limbs a drooping lan-
 guor wept:
 Her head a little bent; and on her
 mouth
 A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded
 moon
 In a still water: then brake out my
 sire,
 Lifting his grim head from my
 wounds. "O you,
 Woman, whom we thought woman
 even now,
 And were half fool'd to let you tend
 our son,
 Because he might have wish'd it—
 but we see
 The accomplice of your madness un-
 forgiven,
 And think that you might mix his
 draught with death,

When your skies change again: the
 rougher hand
 Is safer: on to the tents: take up the
 Prince."

He rose, and while each ear was
 prick'd to attend.
 A tempest, thro' the cloud that
 dimm'd her broke
 A genial warmth and light once
 more, and shone
 Thro' glittering drops on her sad
 friend.

"Come hither,
 O Psyche," she cried out, "embrace
 me, come
 Quick while I melt; make reconcile-
 ment sure
 With one that cannot keep her mind
 an hour:
 Come to the hollow heart they slander
 so!
 Kiss and be friends, like children
 being chid!
 I seem no more: I want forgiveness
 too:
 I should have had to do with none
 but maids,
 That have no links with men. Ah
 false but dear,
 Dear traitor, too much loved, why? —
 why? — Yet see,
 Before these kings we embrace you
 yet once more
 With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
 And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O sire,
 Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait
 upon him,
 Like mine own brother. For my debt
 to him,
 This nightmare weight of gratitude, I
 know it;
 Taunt me no more: yourself and
 yours shall have
 Free adit; we will scatter all our
 maids
 Till happier times each to her proper
 hearth:
 What use to keep them here — now?
 grant my prayer.
 Help, father, brother, help; speak to
 the king:
 Thaw this male nature to some touch
 of that
 Which kills me with myself, and
 drags me down
 From my fift height to mob me up
 with all
 The soft and milky rabble of woman-
 kind,
 Poor weakling ev'n as they are."

Passionate tears
 Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril
 said:

"Your brother, Lady — Florian, —
ask for him

Of your great head — for he is
wounded too —

That you may tend upon him with the
prince."

"Ay so," said Ida with a bitter smile,
"Our laws are broken: let him enter
too."

Then Violet, she that sang the mourn-
ful song,

And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,
Petition'd too for him. "Ay so," she
said,

"I stagger in the stream: I cannot keep
My heart an eddy from the brawling
hour:

We break our laws with ease, but let
it be."

"Ay so?" said Blanche: "Amazed
am I to hear

Your Highness: but your Highness
breaks with ease

The law your Highness did not make:
'twas I.

I had been wedded wife, I knew man-
kind,

And block'd them out; but these men
came to woo

Your Highness — verily I think to
win."

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry
eye:

But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling
tower,

Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and
scorn.

"Fling our doors wide! all, all, not
one, but all,

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
Whatever man lies wounded, friend
or foe,

Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls
flit,

Till the storm die! but had you stood
by us,

The roar that breaks the Pharos from
his base

Had left us rock. She fain would
sting us too,

But shall not. Pass, and mingle with
your likes.

We brook no further insult but are
gone."

She turn'd; the very nape of her
white neck

Was rosed with indignation: but the
Prince

Her brother came; the king her father
charm'd

Her wounded soul with words: nor
did mine own

Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his
hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead
weights, and bare

Straight to the doors: to them the
doors gave way

Groaning, and in the Vestal entry
shriek'd

The virgin marble under iron heels:
And on they moved and gain'd the
hall, and there

Rested: but great the crush was, and
each base,

To left and right, of those tall columns
drown'd

In silken fluctuation and the swarm
Of female whisperers: at the further
end

Was Ida by the throne, the two great
cats

Close by her, like supporters on a
shield,

Bow-back'd with fear: but in the cen-
tre stood

The common men with rolling eyes;
amazed

They glared upon the women, and
aghast

The women stared at these, all silent,
save

When armor clash'd or jingled,
while the day,

Descending, struck athwart the hall,
and shot

A flying splendor out of brass and
steel,

That o'er the statues leapt from head
to head,

Now fired an angry Pallas on the
helm,

Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on
flame,

And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to
room, and died

Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:

And me they bore up the broad stairs,
and thro'

The long-laid galleries past a hundred
doors

To one deep chamber shut from
sound, and due

To languid limbs and sickness; left
me in it;

And others elsewhere they laid; and
all

That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
And chariot, many a maiden passing
home

Till happier times; but some were left
of those

Held sagest, and the great lords out
and in,

From those two hosts that lay beside
the walls,
Walked at their will, and everything
was chang'd.

VII.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the
sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and
take the shape
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I
give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are
seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,
So their fair college turn'd to hos-
pital;
At first with all confusion: by and
by
Sweet order lived again with other
laws:
A kindlier influence reign'd; and
everywhere
Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick: the maidens
came, they talk'd,
They sang, they read: till she not fair
began
To gather light, and she that was, be-
came
Her former beauty treble; and to and
fro
With books, with flowers, with Angel
offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious
act,
And in their own clear element, they
moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
And hatred of her weakness, blent
with shame.
Old studies fail'd; seldom she spoke:
but oft
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone
for hours
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of
men
Darkening her female field: void was
her use,
And she as one that climbs a peak to
gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great
black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall
of night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge
to shore,
And suck the blinding splendor from
the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn
by tarn
Expunge the world: so fared she gaz-
ing there;
So blacken'd all her world in secret,
blank
And waste it seem'd and vain; till
down she came,
And found fair peace once more among
the sick.

And twilight dawn'd; and morn by
morn the lark
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres,
but I
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life:
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-
grown the bowers
Drew the great night into themselves,
and Heaven,
Star after star, arose and fell; but I,
Deeper than those weird doubts could
reach me, lay
Quite sunder'd from the moving Uni-
verse,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor
the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in
their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian: with
her oft,
Melissa came; for Blanche had gone,
but left
Her child among us, willing she should
keep
Court-favor: here and there the small
bright head,
A light of healing, glanced about the
couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded
man
With blush and smile, a medicine in
themselves
To wile the length from languorous
hours, and draw
The sting from pain; nor seem'd it
strange that soon
He rose up whole, and those fair
charities
Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd
that hearts
So gentle, so employ'd, should close
in love,
Than when two dewdrops on the petal
shake
To the same sweet air, and tremble
deeper down,
And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit
 obtain'd
 At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche
 had sworn
 That after that dark night among the
 fields
 She needs must wed him for her own
 good name;
 Not tho' he built upon the babe re-
 stored;
 Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she,
 but fear'd
 To incense the Head once more; till
 on a day
 When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
 Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she
 hung
 A moment, and she heard, at which
 her face
 A little flush'd, and she past on; but
 each
 Assumed from thence a half-consent
 involved
 In stillness, plighted troth, and were
 at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred
 halls
 Held carnival at will, and flying struck
 With showers of random sweet on
 maid and man.
 Nor did her father cease to press my
 claim,
 Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor
 yet
 Did those twin brothers, risen again
 and whole;
 Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she
 sat:
 Then came a change; for sometimes
 I would catch
 Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
 And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
 "You are not Ida;" clasp it once again,
 And call her Ida, tho' I know her not,
 And call her sweet, as if in irony,
 And call her hard and cold which
 seem'd a truth:
 And still she fear'd that I should lose
 my mind,
 And often she believed that I should
 die:
 Till out of long frustration of her care,
 And pensive tendance in the all-weary
 noons,
 And watches in the dead, the dark,
 when clocks
 Throb'd thunder thro' the palace
 floors, or call'd
 On flying Time from all their silver
 tongues —
 And out of memories of her kindlier
 days,

And sidelong glances at my father's
 grief,
 And at the happy lovers heart in
 heart —
 And out of hauntings of my spoken
 love,
 And lonely listenings to my mutter'd
 dream,
 And often feeling of the helpless
 hands,
 And wordless broodings on the wasted
 cheek —
 From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
 Tenderness touch by touch, and last,
 to these,
 Love, like an Alpine harebell hung
 with tears
 By some cold morning glacier; frail
 at first
 And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
 But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close
 to death
 For weakness: it was evening: silent
 light
 Slept on the painted walls, wherein
 were wrought
 Two grand designs; for on one side
 arose
 The women up in wild revolt, and
 storm'd
 At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes,
 they cramm'd
 The forum, and half-crush'd among
 the rest
 A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the
 other side
 Hortensia spoke against the tax; be-
 hind,
 A train of dames: by axe and eagle
 sat,
 With all their foreheads drawn in
 Roman scowls,
 And half the wolf's-milk curdled in
 their veins,
 The fierce triumvirs; and before them
 paused
 Hortensia pleading: angry was her
 face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where
 I was:
 They did but look like hollow shows;
 nor more
 Sweet Ida: palm to palm she sat: the
 dew
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her
 shape
 And rounder seem'd: I moved: I
 sigh'd: a touch
 Came round my wrist, and tears upon
 my hand:
 Then all for languor and self-pity
 ran

Mine down my face, and with what
 life I had,
 And like a flower that cannot all un-
 fold,
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the
 sun,
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on
 her
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whis-
 peringly :

"If you be, what I think you, some
 sweet dream,
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself :
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
 I ask you nothing : only, if a dream,
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die
 to-night.
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I
 die."

I could no more, but lay like one in
 trance,
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his
 friends,
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor
 make one sign,
 But lies and dreads his doom. She
 turn'd ; she paused ;
 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt
 a cry ;
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of
 death ;
 And I believed that in the living world
 My spirit clos'd with Ida's at the lips ;
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms
 she rose
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and all
 Her fals' self slipt from her like a
 robe,
 And left her woman, lovelier in her
 mood
 Than in her mould that other, when
 she came
 From barren deeps to conquer all
 with love ;
 And down the streaming crystal
 dropt ; and she
 Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,
 To meet her Graces, where they
 deck'd her out
 For worship without end ; nor end of
 mine,
 Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she
 glided forth,
 Nor glanced behind her, and I sank
 and slept,
 Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a
 happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near
 me, held
 A volume of the Poets of her land :
 There to herself, all in low tones, she
 read.

"Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
 white ;
 Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;
 Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font :
 The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a
 ghost,
 And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the earth all Danaë to the stars,
 And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
 A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
 And slips into the bosom of the lake :
 So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
 Into my bosom and be lost in me."

I heard her turn the page ; she
 found a small
 Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low,
 she read :

"Come down, O maid, from yonder moun-
 tain height :
 What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd
 sang)
 In height and cold, the splendor of the hills ?
 But cease to move so near the Heavens, and
 cease
 To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
 To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;
 And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
 For Love is of the valley, come thou down
 And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,
 Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
 Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
 Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk
 With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
 Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
 Nor find him dropt upon the firs of ice,
 That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
 To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :
 But follow ; let the torrent dance thee down
 To find him in the valley ; let the wild
 Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
 The monstrous ledges there to slope, and and
 spill
 Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-
 smoke,
 That like a broken purpose waste in air :
 So waste not thou ; but come ; for all the vales
 Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth
 Arise to thee ; the children call, and I
 Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
 Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet ;
 Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned ; while with shut
 eyes I lay
 Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the
 perfect face ;
 The bosom with long sighs labor'd ;
 and meek
 Seem'd the full lips, and mild the
 luminous eyes,
 And the voice trembled and the hand.
 She said
 Brokenly, that she knew it, she had
 fail'd
 In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;
 That all her labor was but as a block
 Left in the quarry ; but she still were
 loth,

She still were loth to yield herself to
 one
 That wholly scorn'd to help their
 equal rights
 Against the sons of men, and barbar-
 ous laws.
 She pray'd me not to judge their
 cause from her
 That wrong'd it, sought far less for
 truth than power
 In knowledge: something wild within
 her breast,
 A greater than all knowledge, beat
 her down.
 And she had nursed me there from
 week to week:
 Much had she learnt in little time.
 In part
 It was ill counsel had misled the girl
 To vex true hearts: yet was she but a
 girl—
 "Ah fool, and made myself a Queen
 of farce!
 When comes another such? never, I
 think,
 Till the Sun drop, dead, from the
 signs."

Her voice
 Choked, and her forehead sank upon
 her hands,
 And her great heart thro' all the
 faultful Past
 Went sorrowing in a pause I dared
 not break;
 Till notice of a change in the dark
 world
 Was lispt about the acacias, and a
 bird,
 That early woke to feed her little ones,
 Sent from a dewy breast a cry for
 light:
 She moved, and at her feet the volume
 fell.

"Blame not thyself too much," I
 said, "nor blame
 Too much the sons of men and bar-
 barous laws;
 These were the rough ways of the
 world till now.
 Henceforth thou hast a helper, me,
 that know
 The woman's cause is man's: they
 rise or sink
 Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or
 free:
 For she that out of Lethe scales with
 man
 The shining steps of Nature, shares
 with man
 His nights, his days, moves with him
 to one goal,
 Stays all the fair young planet in her
 hands—
 If she be small, slight-natured, miser-
 able,

How shall men grow? but work no
 more alone!
 Our place is much: as far as in us lies
 We two will serve them both in aid-
 ing her—
 Will clear away the parasitic forms
 That seem to keep her up but drag
 her down—
 Will leave her space to burgeon out
 of all
 Within her—let her make herself
 her own
 To give or keep, to live and learn and
 be
 All that not harms distinctive woman-
 hood.
 For woman is not undevelop'd man,
 But diverse: could we make her as
 the man,
 Sweet Love were slain: his dearest
 bond is this,
 Not like to like, but like in difference.
 Yet in the long years liker must they
 grow;
 The man be more of woman, she of
 man;
 He gain in sweetness and in moral
 height,
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that
 throw the world;
 She mental breadth, nor fail in child-
 ward care,
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger
 mind;
 Till at the last she set herself to
 man
 Like perfect music unto noble words;
 And so these twain, upon the skirts of
 Time,
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all
 their powers,
 Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
 Self-reverent each and reverencing
 each,
 Distinct in individualities,
 But like each other ev'n as those who
 love.
 Then comes the statelier Eden back
 to men:
 Then reign the world's great bridals,
 chaste and calm:
 Then springs the crowning race of
 human-kind.
 May these things be!"
 Sighing she spoke "I fear
 They will not."
 "Dear, but let us type them now
 In our own lives, and this proud
 watchword rest
 Of equal; seeing either sex alone
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
 Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfils
 Defect in each, and always thought
 in thought,
 Purpose in purpose, will in will, they
 grow,

The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one
full stroke,
Life."

And again sighing she spoke: "A
dream
That once was mine! what woman
taught you this?"

"Alone," I said, "from earlier than
I know,
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of
the world,
I loved the woman: he, that doth not,
lives
A drowning life, besotted in sweet
self,
Or pines in sad experience worse than
death,
Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt
with crime:
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved
her, one
Not learned, save in gracious house-
hold ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender
wants,
No Angel, but a dearer being, all
dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Para-
dise,
Interpreter between the Gods and
men,
Who look'd all native to her place,
and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a
sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male
minds perforce
Sway'd to her from their orbits as
they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy
he
With such a mother! faith in woman-
kind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all
things high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip
and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

"But I,"
Said Ida, tremulously, "so all un-
like —

It seems you love to cheat yourself
with words:

This mother is your model. I have
heard

Of your strange doubts: they well
might be: I seem

A mockery to my own self. Never,
Prince;

You cannot love me."

"Nay but thee," I said
"From yearlong poring on thy pic-
tured eyes,

Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,
and saw

Thee woman thro' the crust of iron
moods

That mask'd thee from men's rever-
ence up, and forced

Sweet love on pranks of saucy boy-
hood: now,

Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'
thee,

Indeed I love: the new day comes, the
light

Dearer for night, as dearer thou for
faults

Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts
are dead,

My haunting sense of hollow shows:
the change,

This truthful change in thee has kill'd
it. Dear,

Look up, and let thy nature strike on
mine,

Like yonder morning on the blind
half-world;

Approach and fear not; breathe upon
my brows;

In that fine air I tremble, all the past
Melts mist-like into this bright hour,
and this

Is morn to more, and all the rich to-
come

Reels, as the golden Autumn wood-
land reels

Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.
Forgive me,

I waste my heart in signs: let be. My
bride,

My wife, my life. O we will walk this
world,

Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
And so thro' those dark gates across
the wild

That no man knows. Indeed I love
thee: come,

Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine
are one:

Accomplish thou my manhood and
thyself;

Lay thy sweet hands in mine and
trust to me."

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give
you all

The random scheme as wildly as it
rose:

The words are mostly mine; for when
we ceased

There came a minute's pause, and
Walter said,

"I wish she had not yielded!" then to
me,

"What, if you drest it up poetically!"
So pray'd the men, the women: I gave
assent:

Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme
 of seven
 Together in one sheaf? What style
 could suit?
 The men required that I should give
 throughout
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
 With which we banter'd little Lilia
 first:
 The women — and perhaps they felt
 their power,
 For something in the ballads which
 they sang,
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with bur-
 lesque,
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn
 close —
 They hated banter, wish'd for some-
 thing real,
 A gallant fight, a noble princess —
 why
 Not make her true-heroic — true-
 sublime?
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the
 close?
 Which yet with such a framework
 scarce could be.
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the
 two,
 Betwixt the mockers and the realists:
 And I, betwixt them both, to please
 them both,
 And yet to give the story as it rose,
 I moved as in a strange diagonal,
 And maybe neither pleased myself
 nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took
 no part
 In our dispute: the sequel of the tale
 Had touch'd her; and she sat, she
 pluck'd the grass,
 She flung it from her, thinking: last,
 she fixt
 A showery glance upon her aunt, and
 said,
 "You — tell us what we are" who
 might have told,
 For she was cram'm'd with theories
 out of books,
 But that there rose a shout: the gates
 were closed
 At sunset, and the crowd were swarm-
 ing now,
 To take their leave, about the garden
 rails.

So I and some went out to these:
 we climb'd
 The slope to Vivian-place, and turn-
 ing saw
 The happy valleys, half in light, and
 half
 Far-shadowing from the west, a land
 of peace;

Gray halls alone among their massive
 groves;
 Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic
 tower
 Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths
 of wheat;
 The shimmering glimpses of a stream;
 the seas;
 A red sail, or a white; and far be-
 yond,
 Imagined more than seen, the skirts
 of France.

"Look there, a garden!" said my
 college friend,
 The Tory member's elder son, "and
 there!
 God bless the narrow sea which keeps
 her off,
 And keeps our Britain, whole within
 herself,
 A nation yet, the rulers and the
 ruled —
 Some sense of duty, something of a
 faith,
 Some reverence for the laws ourselves
 have made,
 Some patient force to change them
 when we will,
 Some civic manhood firm against the
 crowd —
 But yonder, whiff! there comes a sud-
 den heat,
 The gravest citizen seems to lose his
 head,
 The king is scared, the soldier will
 not fight,
 The little boys begin to shoot and
 stab,
 A kingdom topples over with a shriek
 Like an old woman, and down rolls
 the world
 In mock heroics stranger than our
 own;
 Revolts, republics, revolutions, most
 No graver than a schoolboys' barring
 out;
 Too comic for the solemn things they
 are,
 Too solemn for the comic touches in
 them,
 Like our wild Princess with as wise
 a dream
 As some of theirs — God bless the
 narrow seas!
 I wish they were a whole Atlantic
 broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "our-
 selves are full
 Of social wrong; and maybe wildest
 dreams
 Are but the needful preludes of the
 truth:
 For me, the genial day, the happy
 crowd,

The sport half-science, fill me with a
faith,
This fine old world of ours is but a
child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give
it time
To learn its limbs: there is a hand
that guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the
garden rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where
he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head,
and look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Eng-
lishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on
grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler
none;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy
morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now
him, of those
That stood the nearest — now ad-
dress'd to speech —
Who spoke few words and pithy, such
as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for
the year
To follow: a shout rose again, and
made
The long line of the approaching
rookery swerve
From the broad elms, and shook the
branches of the deer

From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,
and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a
shout
More joyful than the city-roar that
hails
Premier or king! Why should not
these great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times
a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice
they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd
away.

But we went back to the Abbey,
and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness
charm'd: we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless
reverie,
Perchance upon the future man: the
walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and
owls whoop'd,
And gradually the powers of the
night,
That range above the region of the
wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight
broke them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the
worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven
of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of
Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-
pleased we went.

MAUD; A MONODRAMA.

PART I.

I.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,
His who had given me life — O father! O God! was it well? —
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinto into the ground:
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast speculation had fail'd,
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,

And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

V.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all.
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintained:
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age — why not? I have neither hope nor trust;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,
Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;
Peace in her vineyard — yes! — but a company forges the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villanous centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home. —

XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire.
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savor nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,
From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen.

III

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,
But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,
Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV.

I.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
 In the little grove where I sit — ah, wherefore cannot I be
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
 Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
 The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land ?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small !
 And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite ;
 And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar ;
 And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall ;
 And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light ;
 But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star !

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race ?
 I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd :
 I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor ;
 But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.
 O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud ;
 Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal ;
 I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like
 A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way :
 For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal
 The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shrike,
 And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower ;
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed ?
 Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour ;
 We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame ;
 However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
 For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
 And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man :
 He now is first, but is he the last ? is he not too base ?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
 An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor ;
 The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain ;
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more
 Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about ?
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.

Shall I weep if a Poland fall ? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail ?
Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout ?
I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,
Far-off from the clamor of liars belied in the hubbub of lies ;
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise
Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.
Ah Maud, you milk-white fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above ;
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will ;
You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

A voice by the cedar tree
In the meadow under the Hall !
She is singing an air that is known to
me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call !
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the
sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an Eng-
lish green,
Maud in the light of her youth and
her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that
cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so
sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice !
Be still, for you only trouble the
mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still ! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me
a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall
before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and
adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor
kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

Morning arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wannish glare
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the budded peaks of the wood are
bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale :
I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunset burn'd
On the blossom'd gable-ends
At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet ?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile
so sweet,
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my
dreams,
Ready to burst in a color'd flame ;
Till at last when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a snare
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,

If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five ?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
Of a kind intent to me,
What if that dandy-despot, he,
That jewell'd mass of millinery,
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull
Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn —
What if he had told her yestermorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings
shake

In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch
and ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and
good?

Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday
moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot
mouse,
And my own sad name in corners
cried,

When the shiver of dancing leaves is
thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have
grown
Of a world in which I have hardly
mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and
caught

By that you swore to withstand ?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of
love,
That made my tongue so stammer and
trip
When I saw the treasured splendor,
her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip ?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

Did I hear it half in a doze
Long since, I know not where ?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair ?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me ;
" Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty : so let it be."

III.

Is it an echo of something
Read with a boy's delight,
Viziers nodding together
In some Arabian night ?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
Somewhere, talking of me ;
" Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
Will have plenty ; so let it be."

VIII.

She came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone ;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone ;
And once, but once, she lifted her
eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely
blush'd
To find they were met by my own ;
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat
stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-banded, dilettante,

Delicate-handed priest intone;
And thought, is it pride, and mused
and sigh'd
"No surely, now it cannot be pride."

IX.

I was walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the moor,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly riding far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side,
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride,
In a moment they were gone:
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendor
plucks
The slavish hat from the villager's
head?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd
gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted
mine
Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men
adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her
side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a
bride.
Blithe would her brother's acceptance
be.
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,

A rabbit mouth that is ever agape —
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splenetic, personal,
base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched
race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county
town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice
as well:
This broad-brimm'd hawkier of holy
things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,
and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his
pence,
This huckster put down war! can he
tell
Whether war be a cause or a conse-
quence?
Put down the passions that make
earth Hell!
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy!
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great
wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head,
hand,
Like some of the simple great ones
gone
For ever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat — one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be!

XI.

I.

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found

What some have found so sweet;
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud? in our wood;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favor!
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?
One is come to woo her.

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I
scorn,

Is that a matter to make me fret?
That a calamity hard to be borne?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vex'd with his pride!
I past him, I was crossing his lands;
He stood on the path a little aside;
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red
and white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his
hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
But while I past he was humming an
air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonized me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place:
Shall I believe him ashamed to be
seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his
face,
A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a
cheat;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet:
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his sister smiled on me?

XIV.

I.

Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is clasped by a passion-flower.



*"There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower."*

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company) looks
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:
And I thought as I stood, if a hand,
as white
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the hasp of the window, and my
Delight
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious
ghost, to glide,

Like a beam of the seventh Heaven,
down to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;

Or the voice of the long sea-wave as
it swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
But I look'd, and round, all round the
house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain
meant but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a
fool of the sleep of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
And I make myself such evil cheer,
That if I be dear to some one else,
Then some one else may have much
to fear;
But if I be dear to some one else,
Then I should be to myself more
dear.
Shall I not take care of all that I think,
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
If I be dear,
If I be dear to some one else.

XVI.

I.

This lump of earth has left his estate
The lighter by the loss of his weight;
And so that he find what he went to
seek,
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and
drown
His heart in the gross mud-honey of
town,
He may stay for a year who has gone
for a week:
But this is the day when I must speak,
And I see my Oread coming down,
O this is the day!
O beautiful creature, what am I
That I dare to look her way;
Think I may hold dominion sweet,
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her
breast,
And dream of her beauty with tender
dread,
From the delicate Arab arch of her
feet
To the grace that, bright and light as
the crest
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
And she knows it not: O, if she knew it,
To know her beauty might half undo it.
I know it the one bright thing to save
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from
crime,
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool
lord,

Dare I bid her abide by her word?
Should I love her so well if she
Had given her word to a thing so low?
Shall I love her as well if she
Can break her word were it even for
me?
I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath; O clamorous
heart,
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my
eye,
For I must tell her before we part,
I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
Over glowing ships;
Over blowing seas,
Over sea sat rest,
Pass the happy news,
Blush it thro' the West;
Till the red man dance
By his red cedar-tree,
And the red man's babe
Leap, beyond the sea.
Blush from West to East,
Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East,
Blush it thro' the West.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my
only friend.
There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my
blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for
end,
Full to the banks, close on the prom-
ised good.

II.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laureis'
pattering talk

Seem'd her light foot along the
 garden walk,
 And shook my heart to think she
 comes once more;
 But even then I heard her close the
 door,
 The gates of Heaven are closed, and
 she is gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
 Nor will be when our summers have
 deceased.
 O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
 In the long breeze that streams to thy
 delicious East,



*"Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree."*

Sighing for Lebanon,
 Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here
 increased,
 Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
 And looking to the South, and fed
 With honey'd rain and delicate air,
 And haunted by the starry head
 Of her whose gentle will has changed
 my fate,
 And made my life a perfumed altar-
 flame;
 And over whom thy darkness must
 have spread
 With such delight as theirs of old,
 thy great
 Forefathers of the thornless garden,
 there
 Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
 whom she came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long
 branches sway,
 And you fair stars that crown a
 happy day
 Go in and out as if at merry play,
 Who am no more so all forlorn,
 As when it seem'd far better to be
 born
 To labor and the mattock-harden'd
 hand,
 Than nursed at ease and brought to
 understand
 A sad astrology, the boundless plan
 That makes you tyrants in your iron
 skies,
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,

Cold fires, yet with power to burn and
brand
His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a
pearl
The countercharm of space and hol-
low sky,
And do accept my madness, and would
die
To save from some slight shame one
simple girl.

VI.

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death
may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet
to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to
pass;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the
grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die; but live a life of truest
breath,
And teach true life to fight with
mortal wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in
drinking-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust
of death?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long
loving kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer
this?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven
here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love
himself more dear."

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the
swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder
bay?
And hark the clock within, the silver
knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in
bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses
play;
But now by this my love has closed
her sight
And given false death her hand, and
stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless
fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden
day.

May nothing there her maiden grace
affright!

Dear heart, I feel with thee the
drowsy spell.

My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own,
farewell;

It is but for a little space I go:

And ye meanwhile far over moor and
fell

Beat to the noiseless music of the
night!

Has our whole earth gone nearer to
the glow

Of your soft splendors that you look
so bright?

I have climb'd nearer out of lonely
Hell.

Beat, happy stars, timing with things
below,

Beat with my heart more blest than
heart can tell,

Blest, but for some dark undercurrent
woe

That seems to draw — but it shall not
be so:

Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

Her brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?

I have walk'd awake with Truth.

O when did a morning shine

So rich in atonement as this

For my dark-dawning youth,

Darken'd watching a mother decline

And that dead man at her heart and
mine:

For who was left to watch her but I?

Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk

To gentle Maud in our walk

(For often in lonely wanderings

I have cursed him even to lifeless
things)

But I trust that I did not talk,

Not touch on her father's sin:

I am sure I did but speak

Of my mother's faded cheek

When it slowly grew so thin,

That I felt she was slowly dying

Vext with lawyers and harass'd with
debt:

For how often I caught her with eyes
all wet,

Shaking her head at her son and sigh-
ing

A world of trouble within!

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
 To speak of the mother she loved
 As one scarce less forlorn,
 Dying abroad and it seems apart
 From him who had ceased to share
 her heart,
 And ever mourning over the feud,
 The household Fury sprinkled with
 blood
 By which our houses are torn :
 How strange was what she said,
 When only Maud and the brother
 Hung over her dying bed —
 That Maud's dark father and mine
 Had bound us one to the other,
 Betrothed us over their wine,
 On the day when Maud was born ;
 Seal'd her mine from her first sweet
 breath.
 Mine, mine by a right, from birth till
 death.
 Mine, mine — our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a
 heat
 To dissolve the precious seal on a
 bond,
 That, if left uncancell'd, had been so
 sweet :
 And none of us thought of a some-
 thing beyond,
 A desire that awoke in the heart of
 the child,
 As it were a duty done to the tomb,
 To be friends for her sake, to be re-
 conciled ;
 And I was cursing them and my
 doom,
 And letting a dangerous thought run
 wild
 While often abroad in the fragrant
 gloom
 Of foreign churches — I see her
 there,
 Bright English lily, breathing a
 prayer
 To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
 Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
 I find whenever she touch'd on me
 This brother had laugh'd her down,
 And at last, when each came home,
 He had darken'd into a frown,
 Chid her, and forbid her to speak
 To me, her friend of the years be-
 fore ;
 And this was what had redden'd her
 cheek
 When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
 To the faults of his heart and mind,
 I see she cannot but love him,
 And says he is rough but kind,
 And wishes me to approve him,
 And tells me, when she lay
 Sick once, with a fear of worse,
 Then he left his wine and horses and
 play,
 Sat with her, read to her, night and
 day,
 And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire
 Spurn'd by this heir of the liar —
 Rough but kind ? yet I know
 He has plotted against me in this,
 That he plots against me still.
 Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.
 Well, rough but kind ; why let it be
 so :
 For shall not Maud have her will ?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
 As long as my life endures
 I feel I shall owe you a debt,
 That I never can hope to pay ;
 And if ever I should forget
 That I owe this debt to you
 And for your sweet sake to yours ;
 O then, what then shall I say ? —
 If ever I *should* forget,
 May God make me more wretched
 Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
 All this dead body of hate,
 I feel so free and so clear
 By the loss of that dead weight,
 That I should grow light-headed, I
 fear,
 Fantastically merry ;
 But that her brother comes, like a
 blight
 On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-
 night.

XX.

I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,
 Strange, that I tried to-day
 To beguile her melancholy ;
 The Sultan, as we name him, —
 She did not wish to blame him —
 But he vexed her and perplexed her
 With his worldly talk and folly :
 Was it gentle to reprove her
 For stealing out of view
 From a little lazy lover

Who but claims her as his due ?
Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her manners,
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?
Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer ;

For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirelings near ;
And Maud will wear her jewels,
And the bird of prey will hover,



*"Or the frock and gipsy bonnet,
Be the neater and completer ;
For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either."*

And the titmouse hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over ;
And then, oh then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,

Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendor.

XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the
Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea ;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odor and color, "Ah, be
Among the roses to-night."

XXII.

I.

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone ;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted
 abroad,
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that
 she loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
 To faint in the light of the sun she
 loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon ;
 All night has the casement jessamine
 stirr'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune ;
 Till a silence fell with the waking
 bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, " There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her
 alone ?
 She is weary of dance and play."
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day ;
 Low on the sand and loud on the
 stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, " The brief night
 goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are
 those,
 For one that will never be thine ?
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to
 the rose,
 " For ever and ever, mine."

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into
 my blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall ;
 And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on
 to the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have
 left so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we
 meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
 One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the
 lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
 But the rose was awake all night for
 your sake,
 Knowing your promise to me ;
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of
 girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of
 pearls,
 Queen lily and rose in one ;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over
 with curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate.
 She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
 She is coming, my life, my fate ;
 The red rose cries, " She is near, she
 is near ;"
 And the white rose weeps, " She is
 late ;"
 The larkspur listens, " I hear, I hear ;"
 And the lily whispers, " I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead ;
 Would start and tremble under her
 feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

PART II.

I.

I.

" THE fault was mine, the fault was
 mine " —
 Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and
 still,

Plucking the harmless wild-flower on
the hill? —

It is this guilty hand! —
And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening
land —

What is it, that has been done?
O dawn of Eden bright over earth
and sky,

The fires of Hell brake out of thy
rising sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate;
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken
a word,

When her brother ran in his rage to
the gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord;
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,
And while she wept, and I strove to
be cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
And he struck me, madman, over the
face,

Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping and grinning by:
Struck for himself an evil stroke;
Wrought for his house an irredeem-
able woe;

For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrible bellowing
echoes broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind
the wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the
Christless code,

That must have life for a blow.
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to
grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye?
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd,
"fly!"

Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wraith of one that I
know;

And there rang on a sudden a pas-
sionate cry,

A cry for a brother's blood:
It will ring in my heart and my ears,
till I die, till I die.

II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat —
What was it? a lying trick of the
brain?

Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet,
High over the shadowy land.

It is gone; and the heavens fall in a
gentle rain,

When they should burst and drown
with deluging storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger
and lust,

The little hearts that know not how
to forgive:

Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold
Thee just,

Strike dead the whole weak race of
venomous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust;
We are not worthy to live.

II.

I.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design!

II.

What is it? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand!

V.

Breton, not Briton; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear —
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main —
Why should it look like Maud?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,

Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;
An old song vexes my ear;
But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part—
But she, she would love me still;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so over-
wrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by!
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and
thought
It is his mother's hair.

IX.

Who knows if he be dead?
Whether I need have fled?
Am I guilty of blood?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things
good,
While I am over the sea!
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and
high,
Whatever happen to me!
Me and my harmful love go by;
But come to her waking, find her
asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the
deep,
And comfort her tho' I die.

III.

Courage, poor heart of stone!
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left for ever alone:
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to reply:
She is but dead, and the time is at
hand
When thou shalt more than die.

IV.

I.

O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter
Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee:
Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might
tell us
What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet;
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings;
In a moment we shall meet;
She is singing in the meadow
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye?
But there rings on a sudden a pas-
sionate cry,

There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;
For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled ;
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about !
'Tis the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without.



*"'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls."*

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
And the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide ;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame,
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and
loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,

Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest" ?

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,

Hearts with no love for me :
 Always I long to creep
 Into some still cavern deep,
 There to weep, and weep, and weep
 My whole soul out to thee.

V.

I.

Dead, long dead,
 Long dead !
 And my heart is a handful of dust,
 And the wheels go over my head,
 And my bones are shaken with pain,
 For into a shallow grave they are
 thrust,
 Only a yard beneath the street,
 And the hoofs of the horses beat,
 beat,
 The hoofs of the horses beat,
 Beat into my scalp and my brain,
 With never an end to the stream of
 passing feet,
 Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,
 Clamor and rumble, and ringing and
 clatter,
 And here beneath it is all as bad,
 For I thought the dead had peace, but
 it is not so ;
 To have no peace in the grave, is that
 not sad ?
 But up and down and to and fro,
 Ever about me the dead men go ;
 And then to hear a dead man chatter
 Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,
 They cannot even bury a man ;
 And tho' we paid our tithes in the
 days that are gone,
 Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was
 read ;
 It is that which makes us loud in the
 world of the dead ;
 There is none that does his work, not
 one ;
 A touch of their office might have
 sufficed,
 But the churchmen fain would kill
 their church,
 As the churches have kill'd their
 Christ.

III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,
 No limit to his distress ;
 And another, a lord of all things,
 praying
 To his own great self, as I guess ;
 And another, a statesman there, be-
 traying
 His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
 And yonder a vile physician, blabbing
 The case of his patient—all for
 what ?

To tickle the maggot born in an
 empty head,
 And wheedle a world that loves him
 not,
 For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
 For the prophecy given of old
 And then not understood,
 Has come to pass as foretold ;
 Not let any man think for the public
 good,
 But babble, merely for babble.
 For I never whisper'd a private affair
 Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
 No, not to myself in the closet alone,
 But I heard it shouted at once from
 the top of the house ;
 Everything came to be known.
 Who told *him* we were there ?

V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came
 not back
 From the wilderness, full of wolves,
 where he used to lie ;
 He has gather'd the bones for his
 o'ergrown whelp to crack ;
 Crack them now for yourself, and
 howl, and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
 And curse me the British vermin, the
 rat ;
 I know not whether he came in the
 Hanover ship,
 But I know that he lies and listens
 mute
 In an ancient mansion's crannies and
 holes :
 Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
 Except that now we poison our babes,
 poor souls !
 It is all used up for that.

VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at
 my head ;
 Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
 He may take her now ; for she never
 speaks her mind,
 But is ever the one thing silent here.
 She is not *of* us, as I divine ;
 She comes from another stiller world
 of the dead,
 Stiller, not fairer than mine.

VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,
 Fairer than aught in the world be-
 side,
 All made up of the lily and rose

That blow by night, when the season
 is good,
 To the sound of dancing music and
 flutes :
 It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
 And I almost fear they are not roses,
 but blood ;
 For the keeper was one, so full of
 pride,
 He linkt a dead man there to a spec-
 tral bride ;
 For he, if he had not been a Sultan of
 brutes,
 Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
 He laid a cruel snare in a pit
 To catch a friend of mine one stormy
 day ;
 Yet now I could even weep to think
 of it ;
 For what will the old man say
 When he comes to the second corpse
 in the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public
 foe,
 Then to strike him and lay him low,
 That were a public merit, far,
 Whatever the Quaker holds, from
 sin ;
 But the red life spilt for a private
 blow —
 I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
 Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me
 deep enough ?
 Is it kind to have made me a grave so
 rough,
 Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?
 Maybe still I am but half-dead ;
 Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;
 I will cry to the steps above my head
 And somebody, surely, some kind
 heart will come
 To bury me, bury me
 Deeper, ever so little deeper.

PART III.

VI.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
 Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,
 That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :
 My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
 When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
 And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
 And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
 Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
 That like a silent lightning under the stars
 She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,
 And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars —
 " And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,
 Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed to Mars
 As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight
 To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,
 That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;
 And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair
 When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the right,
 That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,
 The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,
 Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :
 No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
 Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
 And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
 Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
 And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat
 Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumor of battle grew,
 " It is time, it is time, O passionate heart," said I

(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),
"It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,
That old hysterical mock-disease should die."
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told;
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd!
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar;
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
And noble thought be freer under the sun,
And the heart of a people beat with one desire;
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind,
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,
And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind;
It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill;
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind,
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom assign'd.

ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left
a chasm;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow
sands;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow
wharf
In cluster; then a moulder'd church;
and higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd
mill;
And high in heaven behind it a gray
down
With Danish barrows; and a hazel-
wood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the
down.

Here on this beach a hundred years
ago,
Three children of three houses, Annie
Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,
play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the
shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fish-
ing-nets,
Anchors of rusty-fluke, and boats up-
drawn;
And built their castles of dissolving
sand
To watch them overflow'd, or follow-
ing up
And flying the white breaker, daily
left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the
cliff:
In this the children play'd at keeping
house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the
next,

While Annie still was mistress; but
at times
Enoch would hold possession for a
week:
"This is my house and this my little
wife."
"Mine too" said Philip "turn and
turn about":
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch
stronger-made
Was master: then would Philip, his
blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of
tears,
Shriek out "I hate you, Enoch," and
at this
The little wife would weep for com-
pany,
And pray them not to quarrel for her
sake,
And say she would be little wife to
both.

But when the dawn of rosy child-
hood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascend-
ing sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his
heart
On that one girl; and Enoch spoke
his love,
But Philip loved in silence; and the
girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to
him;
But she loved Enoch; tho' she knew
it not,
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch
set
A purpose evermore before his
eyes,
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make
a home
For Annie: and so prosper'd that at
last
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten
coast

Than Enoch. Likewise had he served
 a year
 On board a merchantman, and made
 himself
 Full sailor; and he thrice had pluck'd
 a life
 From the dread sweep of the down-
 streaming seas:
 And all men look'd upon him favora-
 bly:
 And ere he touch'd his one-and-
 twentieth May,
 He purchased his own boat, and made
 a home
 For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway
 up
 The narrow street that clamber'd
 toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn even-
 tide,
 The younger people making holiday,
 With bag and sack and basket, great
 and small,
 Went nutting to the hazels. Philip
 stay'd
 (His father lying sick and needing
 him)
 An hour behind; but as he climb'd
 the hill,
 Just where the prone edge of the
 wood began
 To feather toward the hollow, saw the
 pair,
 Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-
 hand,
 His large gray eyes and weather-
 beaten face
 All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
 That burn'd as on an altar. Philip
 look'd,
 And in their eyes and faces read his
 doom;
 Then, as their faces drew together,
 groan'd,
 And slipt aside, and like a wounded
 life
 Crept down into the hollows of the
 wood;
 There, while the rest were loud in
 merrymaking,
 Had his dark hour unseen, and rose
 and past
 Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily
 rang the bells,
 And merrily ran the years, seven
 happy years,
 Seven happy years of health and
 competence,
 And mutual love and honorable toil;
 With children; first a daughter. In
 him woke,
 With his first babe's first cry, the
 noble wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,
 And give his child a better bringing-up
 Than his had been, or hers; a wish
 renew'd,
 When two years after came a boy to be
 The rosy idol of her solitudes,
 While Enoch was abroad on wrathful
 seas,
 Or often journeying landward; for in
 truth
 Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's
 ocean-spoil
 In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
 Rough-redden'd with a thousand win-
 ter gales,
 Not only to the market-cross were
 known,
 But in the leafy lanes behind the
 down,
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
 And peacock-yewtree of the lonely
 Hall,
 Whose Friday fare was Enoch's min-
 istering.

Then came a change, as all things
 human change.
 Ten miles to northward of the narrow
 port
 Open'd a larger haven: thither used
 Enoch at times to go by land or
 sea;
 And once when there, and clambering
 on a mast
 In harbor, by mischance he slipt and
 fell:
 A limb was broken when they lifted
 him;
 And while he lay recovering there,
 his wife
 Bore him another son, a sickly one:
 Another hand crept too across his
 trade
 Taking her bread and theirs: and on
 him fell,
 Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing
 man,
 Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and
 gloom.
 He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the
 night,
 To see his children leading evermore
 Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
 And her, he loved, a beggar: then he
 pray'd
 "Save them from this, whatever
 comes to me."
 And while he pray'd, the master of
 that ship
 Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-
 chance,
 Came, for he knew the man and
 valued him,
 Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
 And wanting yet a boatswain. Would
 he go?

There yet were many weeks before she
sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch
have the place?
And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance
appear'd

No graver than as when some little
cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the offing: yet the
wife —
When he was gone — the children —
what to do?
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his
plans;



*"Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms."*

To sell the boat — and yet he loved
her well —
How many a rough sea had he weath-
er'd in her!
He knew her, as a horseman knows his
horse —
And yet to sell her — then with what
she brought
Buy goods and stores — set Annie forth
in trade
With all that seamen needed or their
wives —
So might she keep the house while he
was gone.

Should he not trade himself out yon-
der? go
This voyage more than once? yea twice
or thrice —
As oft as needed — last, returning rich,
Become the master of a larger craft,
With fuller profits lead an easier life,
Have all his pretty young ones edu-
cated,
And pass his days in peace among his
own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined
all:

Then moving homeward came on Annie
 pale,
 Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
 Forward she started with a happy cry,
 And laid the feeble infant in his arms;
 Whom Enoch took, and handled all his
 limbs,
 Appraised his weight and fondled
 fatherlike,
 But had no heart to break his purposes
 To Annie, till the morrow, when he
 spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring
 had girt
 Her finger, Annie fought against his
 will:
 Yet not with brawling opposition she,
 But manifold entreaties, many a tear,
 Many a sad kiss by day by night re-
 new'd
 (Sure that all evil would come out of
 it)
 Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
 For her or his dear children, not to go.
 He not for his own self caring but her,
 Her and her children, let her plead in
 vain;
 So grieving held his will, and bore it
 thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-
 friend,
 Bought Annie goods and stores, and
 set his hand
 To fit their little streetward sitting-
 room
 With shelf and corner for the goods
 and stores.
 So all day long till Enoch's last at
 home,
 Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer
 and axe,
 Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to
 hear
 Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd
 and rang,
 Till this was ended, and his careful
 hand,—
 The space was narrow,—having or-
 der'd all
 Almost as neat and close as Nature
 packs
 Her blossom or her seedling, paused;
 and he,
 Who needs would work for Annie to
 the last,
 Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of
 farewell
 Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's
 fears,
 Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter
 to him.

Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
 Bow'd himself down, and in that mys-
 tery
 Where God-in-man is one with man-
 in-God,
 Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and
 babes
 Whatever came to him: and then he
 said
 "Annie, this voyage by the grace of
 God
 Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
 Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for
 me,
 For I'll be back, my girl, before you
 know it."
 Then lightly rocking baby's cradle
 "and he,
 This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—
 Nay—for I love him all the better for
 it—
 God bless him, he shall sit upon my
 knees
 And I will tell him tales of foreign
 parts,
 And make him merry, when I come
 home again.
 Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I
 go."

Him running on thus hopefully she
 heard,
 And almost hoped herself; but when
 he turn'd
 The current of his talk to graver things
 In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
 On providence and trust in Heaven,
 she heard,
 Heard and not heard him; as the vil-
 lage girl,
 Who sets her pitcher underneath the
 spring,
 Musing on him that used to fill it for
 her,
 Hears and not hears, and lets it over-
 flow.

At length she spoke "O Enoch, you
 are wise;
 And yet for all your wisdom well
 know I
 That I shall look upon your face no
 more."

"Well then," said Enoch, "I shall
 look on yours.
 Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
 (He named the day) get you a seaman's
 glass,
 Spy out my face, and laugh at all your
 fears."

But when the last of those last mo-
 ments came,
 "Annie, my girl, cheer up, be com-
 forted,

Look to the babes, and till I come
again
Keep everything shipshape, for I must
go.
And fear no more for me; or if you
fear
Cast all your cares on God; that an-
chor holds.
Is He not yonder in those uttermost
Parts of the morning? if I flee to these
Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
The sea is His: He made it."

Enoch rose,
Cast his strong arms about his droop-
ing wife,
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little
ones;
But for the third, the sickly one, who
slept
After a night of feverous wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him
Enoch said
"Wake him not; let him sleep; how
should the child
Remember this?" and kiss'd him in
his cot.
But Annie from her baby's forehead
clipt
A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept
Thro' all his future; but now hastily
caught
His bundle, waved his hand, and went
his way.

She, when the day that Enoch
mention'd, came,
Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain:
perhaps
She could not fix the glass to suit her
eye;
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand trem-
ulous;
She saw him not. and while he stood
on deck
Waving, the moment and the vessel
past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing
sail
She watch'd it, and departed weeping
for him;
Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as
his grave,
Set her sad will no less to chime with
his,
But throve not in her trade, not being
bred
To barter, nor compensating the want
By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
And still foreboding "what would
Enoch say?"
For more than once, in days of diffi-
culty

And pressure, had she sold her wares
for less
Than what she gave in buying what
she sold:
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it;
and thus,
Expectant of that news which never
came,
Gain'd for her own a scanty suste-
nance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born
and grew
Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for
it
With all a mother's care: neverthe-
less,
Whether her business often call'd her
from it,
Or thro' the want of what it needed
most,
Or means to pay the voice who best
could tell
What most it needed — howsoe'er it
was,
After a lingering, — ere she was
aware, —
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie
buried it,
Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for
her peace
(Since Enoch left he had not look'd
upon her),
Smote him, as having kept aloof so
long.
"Surely," said Philip, "I may see her
now,
May be some little comfort"; there-
fore went,
Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Paused for a moment at an inner door,
Then struck it thrice, and, no one
opening,
Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her
grief,
Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,
But turn'd her own toward the wall
and wept.
Then Philip standing up said falter-
ingly
"Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."

He spoke; the passion in her moan'd
reply
"Favor from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am!" half abash'd him; yet
unask'd,
His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to
her:

"I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,
 Enoch, your husband: I have ever said
 You chose the best among us—a strong man:
 For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.
 And wherefore did he go this weary way,
 And leave you lonely? not to see the world—
 For pleasure?—nay, but for the wherewithal
 To give his babes a better bringing-up
 Than his had been, or yours: that was his wish.
 And if he come again, next will he be
 To find the precious morning hours were lost.
 And it would vex him even in his grave,
 If he could know his babes were running wild
 Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now—
 Have we not known each other all our lives?
 I do beseech you by the love you bear
 Him and his children not to say me nay—
 For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
 Why then he shall repay me—if you will,
 Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
 Now let me put the boy and girl to school:
 This is the favor that I came to ask."

Then Annie with her brows against the wall
 Answer'd "I cannot look you in the face;
 I seem so foolish and so broken down.
 When you came in my sorrow broke me down;
 And now I think your kindness breaks me down;
 But Enoch lives; that is borne in on me:
 He will repay you: money can be repaid;
 Not kindness such as yours."

And Philip ask'd
 "Then you will let me, Annie?"

There she turn'd,
 She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon him,
 And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,

Then calling down a blessing on his head
 Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,
 And past into the little garth beyond.
 So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
 And bought them needful books, and every way,
 Like one who does his duty by his own,
 Made himself theirs; and tho' for Annie's sake,
 Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
 He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
 And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
 Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,
 The late and early roses from his wall,
 Or conies from the down, and now and then,
 With some pretext of fineness in the meal
 To save the offence of charitable, flour
 From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind:
 Scarce could the woman when he came upon her,
 Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
 Light on a broken word to thank him with.
 But Philip was her children's all-in-all;
 From distant corners of the street they ran
 To greet his hearty welcome heartily;
 Lords of his house and of his mill were they;
 Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
 Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him
 And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd
 As Enoch lost; for Enoch seem'd to them
 Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
 Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
 Down at the far end of an avenue,
 Going we know not where: and so ten years,
 Since Enoch left his hearth and native land,
 Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
 To go with others, nutting to the wood,

And Annie would go with them; then
they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they call'd him)
too:
Him, like the working bee in blossom-
dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found;
and saying to him
"Come with us Father Philip" • he
denied;
But when the children pluck'd at him
to go,
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to
their wish,
For was not Annie with them? and
they went.

But after scaling half the weary
down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began
To feather toward the hollow, all her
force
Fail'd her; and sighing, "Let me rest"
she said:
So Philip rested with her well-content;
While all the younger ones with jubi-
lant cries
Broke from their elders, and tumul-
tuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made
a plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and
bent or broke
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear
away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each
other
And calling, here and there, about the
wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one
dark hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded
life
He crept into the shadow: at last he
said,
Lifting his honest forehead, "Listen,
Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in
the wood.
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak
a word.
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon
her hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in
him,
"The ship was lost," he said, "the
ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill
yourself
And make them orphans quite?" And
Annie said

"I thought not of it: but — I know
not why —
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer
spoke.
"Annie, there is a thing upon my
mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first
came there,
I know that it will out at last. O
Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all
chance,
That he who left you ten long years
ago
Should still be living; well then —
let me speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting
help:
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless — they say that women are so
quick —
Perhaps you know what I would have
you know —
I wish you for my wife. I fain would
prove
A father to your children: I do
think
They love me as a father: I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine
own;
And I believe, if you were fast my
wife,
That after all these sad uncertain
years,
We might be still as happy as God
grants
To any of his creatures. Think upon
it:
For I am well-to-do — no kin, no care,
No burthen, save my care for you and
yours:
And we have known each other all our
lives,
And I have loved you longer than you
know."

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she
spoke:
"You have been as God's good angel
in our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you
for it,
Philip, with something happier than
myself.
Can one love twice? can you be ever
loved
As Enoch was? what is it that you
ask?"
"I am content" he answer'd "to be
loved
A little after Enoch." "O" she
cried,

Scared as it were, "dear Philip, wait
a while :
If Enoch comes — but Enoch will not
come —
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long :
Surely I shall be wiser in a year :
O wait a little!" Philip sadly said
"Annie, as I have waited all my life
I well may wait a little." "Nay" she
cried
"I am bound: you have my promise
— in a year :
Will you not bide your year as I bide
mine ?"
And Philip answer'd "I will bide my
year."

Here both were mute, till Philip
glancing up
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen
day
Pass from the Danish barrow over-
head ;
Then fearing night and chill for
Annie, rose
And sent his voice, beneath him thro'
the wood.
Up came the children laden with their
spoil ;
Then all descended to the port, and
there
At Annie's door he paused and gave
his hand,
Saying gently "Annie, when I spoke
to you,
That was your hour of weakness. I
was wrong,
I am always bound to you, but you
are free."
Then Annie weeping answer'd "I am
bound."

She spoke ; and in one moment as
it were,
While yet she went about her house-
hold ways,
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest
words,
That he had loved her longer than she
knew,
That autumn into autumn flash'd
again,
And there he stood once more before
her face,
Claiming her promise. "Is it a year ?"
she ask'd.
"Yes, if the nuts" he said "be ripe
again :
Come out and see." But she — she
put him off —
So much to look to — such a change
— a month —
Give her a month — she knew that
she was bound —
A month — no more. Then Philip
with his eyes

Full of that lifelong hunger, and his
voice
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,
"Take your own time, Annie, take
your own time."
And Annie could have wept for pity
of him ;
And yet she held him on delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-suffer-
ance,
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but
trifle with her ;
Some that she but held off to draw
him on ;
And others laugh'd at her and Philip
too,
As simple folk that knew not their
own minds,
And one, in whom all evil fancies clung
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly
Would hint at worse in either. Her
own son
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his
wish ;
But evermore the daughter prest upon
her
To wed the man so dear to all of them
And lift the household out of poverty ;
And Philip's rosy face contracting
grew
Careworn and wan ; and all these
things fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but ear-
nestly
Pray'd for a sign "my Enoch is he
gone ?"
Then compass'd round by the blind
wall of night
Brook'd not the expectant terror of
her heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself
a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
"Under the palm-tree." That was
nothing to her :
No meaning there: she closed the
Book and slept :
When lo ! her Enoch sitting on a
height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the
Sun :
"He is gone," she thought, "he is
happy, he is singing
Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines

The Sun of Righteousness, and these
be palms
Whereof the happy people strowing
cried
‘Hosanna in the highest!’” Here
she woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly
to him
“There is no reason why we should
not wed.”
“Then for God’s sake,” he answer’d,
“both our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once.”

So these were wed and merrily rang
the bells,
Merrily rang the bells and they were
wed.
But never merrily beat Annie’s heart.
A footstep seem’d to fall beside her
path,
She knew not whence; a whisper on
her ear,
She knew not what; nor loved she to
be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out
alone.
What ail’d her then, that ere she
enter’d, often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the
latch,
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he
knew:
Such doubts and fears were common
to her state,
Being with child: but when her child
was born,
Then her new child was as herself
renew’d,
Then the new mother came about her
heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly
died.

And where was Enoch? prosper-
ously sail’d
The ship “Good Fortune,” tho’ at
setting forth
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,
shook
And almost overwhelm’d her, yet
unvext
She slept across the summer of the
world,
Then after a long tumble about the
Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and
fair,
She passing thro’ the summer world
again,
The breath of heaven came continu-
ally
And sent her sweetly by the golden
isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself,
and bought
Quaint monsters for the market of
those times,
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at
first indeed
Thro’ many a fair sea-circle, day by
day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-
head
Stared o’er the ripple feathering from
her bows:
Then follow’d calms, and then winds
variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them;
and last
Storm, such as drove her under moon-
less heavens
Till hard upon the cry of “breakers”
came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the
night,
Buoy’d upon floating tackle and
broken spars,
These drifted, stranding on an isle at
morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human suste-
nance,
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nour-
ishing roots;
Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was
tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-
gorge
They built, and thatch’d with leaves
of palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the
three,
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-
content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more
than boy,
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and
wreck,
Lay lingering out a five-years’ death-
in-life.
They could not leave him. After he
was gone,
The two remaining found a fallen
stem;
And Enoch’s comrade, careless of
himself,
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion,
fell
Sun-stricken, and that other lived
alone.
In those two deaths he read God’s
warning “wait.”

The mountain wooded to the peak,
 the lawns
 And winding glades high up like ways
 to Heaven,
 The slender coco's drooping crown of
 plumes,
 The lightning flash of insect and of
 bird,
 The lustre of the long convolvuluses
 That coil'd around the stately stems,
 and ran
 Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
 And glories of the broad belt of the
 world,
 All these he saw; but what he fain
 had seen
 He could not see, the kindly human
 face,
 Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
 The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-
 fowl,
 The league-long roller thundering on
 the reef,
 The moving whisper of huge trees
 that branch'd
 And blossom'd in the zenith, or the
 sweep
 Of some precipitous rivulet to the
 wave,
 As down the shore he ranged, or all
 day long
 Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
 A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a
 sail:
 No sail from day to day, but every
 day
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
 Among the palms and ferns and
 precipices;
 The blaze upon the waters to the east;
 The blaze upon his island overhead;
 The blaze upon the waters to the west;
 Then the great stars that globed
 themselves in Heaven,
 The hollow-bellowing ocean, and
 again
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no
 sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd
 to watch,
 So still, the golden lizard on him
 paused,
 A phantom made of many phantoms
 moved
 Before him haunting him, or he him-
 self
 Moved haunting people, things and
 places, known
 Far in a darker isle beyond the line;
 The babes, their babble, Annie, the
 small house,
 The climbing street, the mill, the
 leafy lanes,
 The peacock-yewtree and the lonely
 Hall,

The horse he drove, the boat he sold,
 the chill
 November dawns and dewy-glooming
 downs,
 The gentle shower, the smell of dying
 leaves,
 And the low moan of leaden-color'd
 seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his
 ears,
 Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far
 away—
 He heard the pealing of his parish
 bells;
 Then, tho' he knew not wherefore,
 started up
 Shuddering, and when the beauteous
 hateful isle
 Return'd upon him, had not his poor
 heart
 Spoken with That, which being every-
 where
 Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem
 all alone,
 Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering
 head
 The sunny and rainy seasons came
 and went
 Year after year. His hopes to see
 his own,
 And pace the sacred old familiar
 fields,
 Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely
 doom
 Came suddenly to an end. Another
 ship
 (She wanted water) blown by baffling
 winds,
 Like the Good Fortune, from her
 destined course,
 Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where
 she lay:
 For since the mate had seen at early
 dawn
 Across a break on the mist-wreathen
 isle
 The silent water slipping from the
 hills,
 They sent a crew that landing burst
 away
 In search of stream or fount, and
 fill'd the shores
 With clamor. Downward from his
 mountain gorge
 Stept the long-hair'd, long-bearded
 solitary,
 Brown, looking hardly human,
 strangely clad,
 Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it
 seem'd,
 With inarticulate rage, and making
 signs

They knew not what: and yet he led
the way
To where the rivulets of sweet water
ran;
And ever as he mingled with the crew,
And heard them talking, his long-
bounden tongue
Was loosen'd, till he made them
understand;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd
they took aboard:
And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
Scarce-credited at first but more and
more,
Amazed and melted all who listen'd
to it:
And clothes they gave him and free
passage home;
But oft he work'd among the rest and
shook
His isolation from him. None of
these
Came from his country, or could an-
swer him,
If question'd, aught of what he cared
to know.
And dull the voyage was with long
delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but
evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded
moon
He like a lover down thro' all his
blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-
breath
Of England, blown across her ghostly
wall:
And that same morning officers and
men
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him
it:
Then moving up the coast they landed
him,
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any
one,
But homeward — home — what home?
had he a home?
His home, he walk'd. Bright was that
afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either
chasm,
Where either haven open'd on the
deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the
world in gray;
Cut off the length of highway on be-
fore,
And left but narrow breadth to left
and right
Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.

On the nigh-naked tree the robin
piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping
haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore
it down:
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the
gloom;
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted
light
Flared on him, and he came upon the
place.

Then down the long street having
slowly stolen,
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd
the home
Where Annie lived and loved him, and
his babes
In those far-off seven happy years were
born;
But finding neither light nor murmur
there
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle)
crept
Still downward thinking "dead or
dead to me!"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf
he went,
Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
A front of timber-crost antiquity,
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
He thought it must have gone; but he
was gone
Who kept it; and his widow Miriam
Lane,
With daily-dwindling profits held the
house;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but
now
Still, with yet a bed for wandering
men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and
garrulous,
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the
port,
Not knowing — Enoch was so brown,
so bow'd,
So broken — all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to
school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing
her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and
the birth
Of Philip's child: and o'er his coun-
tenance
No shadow past, nor motion: any one,

Regarding, well had deem'd he felt
 the tale
 Less than the teller: only when she
 closed
 "Enoch, poor man, was cast away and
 lost"
 He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
 Repeated muttering "cast away and
 lost";
 Again in deeper inward whispers
 "lost!"

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face
 again;
 "If I might look on her sweet face
 again
 And know that she is happy." So the
 thought
 Haunted and harass'd him, and drove
 him forth,
 At evening when the dull November
 day
 Was growing duller twilight, to the
 hill.
 There he sat down gazing on all below;
 There did a thousand memories roll
 upon him,
 Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's
 house,
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze al-
 lures
 The bird of passage, till he madly
 strikes
 Against it, and beats out his weary
 life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the
 street,
 The latest house to landward; but be-
 hind,
 With one small gate that open'd on
 the waste,
 Flourish'd a little garden square and
 wall'd:
 And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
 A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it:
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk
 and stole
 Up by the wall, behind the yew; and
 thence
 That which he better might have
 shunn'd, if griefs
 Like his have worse or better, Enoch
 saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd
 board
 Sparkled and shone; so genial was the
 hearth:
 And on the right hand of the hearth
 he saw
 Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,

Stout, rosy, with his babe across his
 knees;
 And o'er her second father stoopt a
 girl,
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
 Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her
 lifted hand
 Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
 To tempt the babe, who rear'd his
 creasy arms,
 Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they
 laugh'd;
 And on the left hand of the hearth he
 saw
 The mother glancing often toward her
 babe,
 But turning now and then to speak
 with him,
 Her son, who stood beside her tall and
 strong,
 And saying that which pleased him,
 for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life
 beheld
 His wife his wife no more, and saw the
 babe
 Hers, yet not his, upon the father's
 knee,
 And all the warmth, the peace, the
 happiness,
 And his own children tall and beauti-
 ful,
 And him, that other, reigning in his
 place,
 Lord of his rights and of his children's
 love, —
 Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told
 him all,
 Because things seen are mightier than
 things heard,
 Stagger'd and shook, holding the
 branch, and fear'd
 To send abroad a shrill and terrible
 cry,
 Which in one moment, like the blast
 of doom,
 Would shatter all the happiness of the
 hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a
 thief,
 Lest the harsh shingle should grate
 underfoot,
 And feeling all along the garden-wall,
 Lest he should swoon and tumble and
 be found,
 Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and
 closed,
 As lightly as a sick man's chamber-
 door,
 Behind him, and came out upon the
 waste.

And there he would have knelt, but
 that his knees

Were feeble, so that falling prone he
dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and
pray'd.

"Too hard to bear! why did they
take me thence?
O God Almighty, blessed Saviour,
Thou
That didst uphold me on my lonely
isle,
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me
strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her
peace.
My children too! must I not speak to
these?
They know me not. I should betray
myself.
Never: No father's kiss for me—the
girl
So like her mother, and the boy, my
son."

There speech and thought and nature
fail'd a little,
And he lay tranced; but when he rose
and paced
Back toward his solitary home again,
All down the long and narrow street
he went
Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
"Not to tell her, never to let her
know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Uppore him, and firm faith, and ever-
more
Prayer from a living source within the
will,
And beating up thro' all the bitter
world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the
sea,
Kept him a living soul. "This mil-
ler's wife"
He said to Miriam "that you spoke
about,
Has she no fear that her first husband
lives?"
"Ay, ay, poor soul" said Miriam,
"fear enow!
If you could tell her you had seen him
dead,
Why, that would be her comfort;"
and he thought
"After the Lord has call'd me she
shall know,
I wait His time," and Enoch set him-
self,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby
to live.

Almost to all things could he turn his
hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and
wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or
help'd
At lading and unlading the tall barks,
That brought the stinted commerce
of those days;
Thus earn'd a scanty living for him-
self:
Yet since he did but labor for himself,
Work without hope, there was not life
in it
Whereby the man could live; and as
the year
Roll'd itself round again to meet the
day
When Enoch had return'd, a languor
came
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do
no more,
But kept the house, his chair, and last
his bed.
And Enoch bore his weakness cheer-
fully.
For sure no gladlier does the stranded
wreck
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting
squall
The boat that bears the hope of life
approach
To save the life despair'd of, than he
saw
Death dawning on him, and the close
of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a
kindlier hope
On Enoch thinking "after I am
gone,
Then may she learn I lov'd her to the
last."
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and
said
"Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
Before I tell you—swear upon the
book
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."
"Dead," clamor'd the good woman,
"hear him talk!
I warrant, man, that we shall bring
you round."
"Swear" added Enoch sternly "on
the book."
And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam
swore.
Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon
her,
"Did you know Enoch Arden of this
town?"
"Know him?" she said "I knew him
far away.
Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the
street;

Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."
 Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;
 "His head is low, and no man cares for him.
 I think I have not three days more to live;
 I am the man." At which the woman gave
 A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.
 "You Arden, you! nay, — sure he was a foot
 Higher than you be." Enoch said again
 "My God has bow'd me down to what I am;
 My grief and solitude have broken me;
 Nevertheless, know you that I am he
 Who married — but that name has twice been changed —
 I married her who married Philip Ray.
 Sit, listen." Then he told her of his voyage,
 His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
 His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
 And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
 Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,
 While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly
 To rush abroad all round the little haven,
 Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;
 But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,
 Saying only "See your bairns before you go!
 Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose
 Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
 A moment on her words, but then replied:

"Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
 But let me hold my purpose till I die.
 Sit down again; mark me and understand,
 While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
 When you shall see her, tell her that I died
 Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;
 Save for the bar between us, loving her
 As when she laid her head beside my own.

And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
 So like her mother, that my latest breath
 Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
 And tell my son that I died blessing him.
 And say to Philip that I blest him too;
 He never meant us any thing but good.
 But if my children care to see me dead,
 Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
 I am their father; but she must not come,
 For my dead face would vex her after-life.
 And now there is but one of all my blood
 Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:
 This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,
 And I have borne it with me all these years.
 And thought to bear it with me to my grave;
 But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
 My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,
 Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:
 It will moreover be a token to her,
 That I am he."

He ceased; and Miriam Lane
 Made such a voluble answer promising all,
 That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
 Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
 She promised.

Then the third night after this,
 While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
 And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
 There came so loud a calling of the sea,
 That all the houses in the haven rang.
 He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad
 Crying with a loud voice "A sail! a sail!
 I am saved;" and so fell back and spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
 And when they buried him the little port
 Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCLXXXIII.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
 Whom we, that have not seen thy
 face,
 By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
 Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and
 shade;
 Thou madest Life in man and
 brute;
 Thou madest Death; and lo, thy
 foot
 Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
 Thou madest man, he knows not
 why,
 He thinks he was not made to die;
 And thou hast made him: thou art
 just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
 The highest, holiest manhood,
 thou:
 Our wills are ours, we know not
 how;
 Our wills are ours, to make them
 thine.

Our little systems have their day;
 They have their day and cease
 to be:
 They are but broken lights of
 thee,
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know;
 For knowledge is of things we see;
 And yet we trust it comes from
 thee,
 A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to
 more,
 But more of reverence in us
 dwell;
 That mind and soul, according
 well,
 May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
 We mock thee when we do not
 fear:
 But help thy foolish ones to bear;
 Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;
 What seem'd my worth since I
 began;

For merit lives from man to man,
 And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
 Thy creature, whom I found so
 fair.

I trust he lives in thee, and there
 I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering
 cries,
 Confusions of a wasted youth;
 Forgive them where they fail in
 truth,
 And in thy wisdom make me wise.
 1849.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
 To one clear harp in divers tones,
 That men may rise on stepping-
 stones
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
 And find in loss a gain to match?
 Or reach a hand thro' time to
 catch
 The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be
 drown'd,
 Let darkness keep her raven
 gloss:
 Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
 To dance with death, to beat the
 ground,

Than that the victor Hours should
 scorn
 The long result of love, and
 boast,
 "Behold the man that loved and
 lost,
 But all he was is overworn."

II.

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
 That name the under-lying dead,
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
 And bring the firstling to the
 flock;
 And in the dusk of thee, the
 clock
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
 Who changest not in any gale,
 Nor branding summer suns avail
 To touch thy thousand years of
 gloom:

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
 I seem to fail from out my blood
 And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
 O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
 O sweet and bitter in a breath,
 What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly
 run;
 A web is wov'n across the sky;
 From out waste places comes a
 cry,
 And murmurs from the dying sun:

"And all the phantom, Nature,
 stands—
 With all the music in her tone,
 A hollow echo of my own,—
 A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,
 Embrace her as my natural good;
 Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
 Upon the threshold of the mind?

IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away;
 My will is bondsman to the dark;
 I sit within a helmless bark,
 And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
 That thou should'st fail from thy
 desire,
 Who scarcely darest to inquire,
 "What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,
 Some pleasure from thine early
 years.
 Break, thou deep vase of chilling
 tears,
 That grief hath shaken into frost!

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
 All night below the darken'd
 eyes;
 With morning wakes the will, and
 cries,
 "Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

V.

I sometimes hold it half a sin
 To put in words the grief I feel;

For words, like Nature, half re-
 veal
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
 A use in measured language lies;
 The sad mechanic exercise,
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
 Like coarsest clothes against the
 cold:

But that large grief which these
 enfold
 Is given in outline and no more.

VI.

One writes, that "Other friends re-
 main,"
 That "Loss is common to the
 race"—
 And common is the commonplace,
 And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
 My own less bitter, rather more:
 Too common! Never morning
 wore
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
 Who pledgedst now thy gallant son;
 A shot, ere half thy draught be
 done,
 Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
 Thy sailor,—while thy head is
 bow'd
 His heavy-shotted hammock-
 shroud
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
 At that last hour to please him
 well;
 Who mused on all I had to tell,
 And something written, something
 thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
 And ever met him on his way
 With wishes, thinking, "here to-
 day,"
 Or "here to-morrow will he come."

O somewhere, meek, unconscious dove,
 That sittest ranging golden hair;
 And glad to find thyself so fair,
 Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows
 In expectation of a guest;
 And thinking "this will please
 him best,"
 She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;
 And with the thought her color
 burns;
 And, having left the glass, she
 turns
 Once more to set a ringlet right;
 And, even when she turn'd, the curse
 Had fallen, and her future Lord

Was drown'd in passing thro' the
 ford,
 Or kill'd in falling from his horse.
 O what to her shall be the end?
 And what to me remains of
 good?
 To her, perpetual maidenhood,
 And unto me no second friend.



*"Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
 Sailed the placid ocean-plains."*

VII.

Dark house, by which once more I
 stand
 Here in the long unlovely street,
 Doors, where my heart was used
 to beat
 So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more —
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
 And like a guilty thing I creep
 At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
 The noise of life begins again,
 And ghastly thro' the drizzling
 rain
 On the bald street breaks the blank
 day.

VIII.

A happy lover who has come
 To look on her that loves him well,
 Who 'lights and rings the gate-
 way bell,
 And learns her gone and far from
 home;

He saddens, all the magic light
 Dies off at once from bower and
 hall,
 And all the place is dark, and all
 The chambers emptied of delight:

So find I every pleasant spot
 In which we two were wont to
 meet,
 The field, the chamber and the
 street,
 For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
 In those deserted walks, may find
 A flower beat with rain and wind,
 Which once she foster'd up with care;

So seems it in my deep regret,
 O my forsaken heart, with thee
 And this poor flower of poesy
 Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,
 I go to plant it on his tomb,
 That if it can it there may bloom,
 Or dying, there at least may die.

IX.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
 Sailest the placid ocean-plains
 With my lost Arthur's loved re-
 mains,
 Spread thy full wings, and waft him
 o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
 In vain; a favorable speed
 Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
 Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
 Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor,
 bright
 As our pure love, thro' early light
 Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the
 prow;
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps
 now,

My friend, the brother of my love;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
 Till all my widow'd race be run;
 Dear as the mother to the son,
 More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I hear the noise about thy keel;
 I hear the bell struck in the night:
 I see the cabin-window bright;
 I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,
 And travell'd men from foreign
 lands;
 And letters unto trembling hands;
 And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him: we have idle dreams;
 This look of quiet flatters thus
 Our home-bred fancies: O to us,
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
 That takes the sunshine and the
 rains,

Or where the kneeling hamlet
 drains
 The chalice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
 Should gulf him fathom-deep in
 brine;
 And hands so often clasp'd in
 mine,
 Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI.

Calm is the morn without a sound,
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
 And only thro' the faded leaf
 The chestnut pattering to the ground:

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
 And on these dewdrops that drench
 the furze,
 And all the silvery gossamers
 That twinkle into green and gold:

Calm and still light on yon great plain
 That sweeps with all its autumn
 bowers,
 And crowded farms and lessening
 towers,
 To mingle with the bounding main:

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
 These leaves that redden to the
 fall;
 And in my heart, if calm at all,
 If any calm, a calm despair:

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
 And waves that sway themselves
 in rest,
 And dead calm in that noble
 breast
 Which heaves but with the heaving
 deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs
 To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
 Some dolorous message knit below
 The wild pulsation of her wings;

Like her I go; I cannot stay;
 I leave this mortal ark behind,
 A weight of nerves without a mind,
 And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
 And reach the glow of southern
 skies,
 And see the sails at distance rise,
 And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying; "Comes he thus, my
 friend?
 Is this the end of all my care?"
 And circle moaning in the air:
 "Is this the end? Is this the end?"

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms,
and feels
Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart re-
posed ;
And, where warm hands have
prest and closed,
Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my
choice,
An awful thought, a life re-
moved,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me, many
years,
I do not suffer in a dream :
For now so strange do these
things seem,
Mine eyes have leisure for their
tears ;

My fancies time to rise on wing,
And glance about the approach-
ing sails,
As tho' they brought but mer-
chants' bales,
And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land
to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with
woe,
Should see thy passengers in
rank
Come stepping lightly down the
plank,
And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine ;
Should strike a sudden hand in
mine,
And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of
late,
And he should sorrow o'er my
state
And marvel what possess'd my brain ;

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the
same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

To-night the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping
day :
The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies ;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea ;
And wildly dash'd on tower and
tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world :

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and
stir

That makes the barren branches
loud ;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring
breast,
And topples round the dreary
west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

What words are these have fall'n
from me ?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or sorrow such a changeling be ?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or
storm ;
But knows no more of transient
form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark
Hung in the shadow of a heaven ?
Or has the shock, so harshly
given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
 And staggers blindly ere she
 sink ?
 And stunn'd me from my power
 to think
 And all my knowledge of myself ;

 And made me that delirious man
 Whose fancy fuses old and new,
 And flashes into false and true,
 And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

Thou comest, much wept for : such a
 breeze
 Compell'd thy canvas, and my
 prayer
 Was as the whisper of an air
 To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
 Thro' circles of the bounding
 sky,
 Week after week : the days go
 by !
 Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou may'st
 roam,
 My blessing, like a line of light,
 Is on the waters day and night,
 And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
 Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred
 bark ;
 And balmy drops in summer
 dark
 Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
 Such precious relics brought by
 thee ;
 The dust of him I shall not see
 Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may
 stand
 Where he in English earth is laid,
 And from his ashes may be made
 The violet of his native land.

'Tis little ; but it looks in truth
 As if the quiet bones were blest
 Among familiar names to rest
 And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the
 head
 That sleeps or wears the mask of
 sleep,
 And come, whatever loves to
 weep,
 And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,
 I, falling on his faithful heart,
 Would breathing thro' his lips
 impart
 The life that almost dies in me ;

 That dies not, but endures with pain,
 And slowly forms the firmer
 mind,
 Treasuring the look it cannot
 find,
 The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave
 The darken'd heart that beat no
 more ;
 They laid him by the pleasant
 shore,
 And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;
 The salt sea-water passes by,
 And hushes half the babbling
 Wye,
 And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
 And hush'd my deepest grief of
 all,
 When fill'd with tears that can-
 not fall,
 I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
 Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
 My deeper anguish also falls,
 And I can speak a little then.

XX.

The lesser griefs that may be said,
 That breathe a thousand tender
 vows,
 Are but as servants in a house
 Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,
 And weep the fulness from the
 mind :
 " It will be hard," they say, " to
 find
 Another service such as this."

My lighter moods are like to these,
 That out of words a comfort
 win ;
 But there are other griefs within,
 And tears that at their fountain
 freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit
 Cold in that atmosphere of
 Death,
 And scarce endure to draw the
 breath,
 Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

But open converse is there none,
 So much the vital spirits sink
 To see the vacant chair, and
 think,
 "How good! how kind! and he is
 gone."

XXI.

I sing to him that rests below,
 And, since the grasses round me
 wave,
 I take the grasses of the grave,
 And make them pipes whereon to
 blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
 And sometimes harshly will he
 speak:
 "This fellow would make weak-
 ness weak,
 And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,
 He loves to make parade of pain,
 That with his piping he may gain
 The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth: "Is this an hour
 For private sorrow's barren song,
 When more and more the people
 throng
 The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

"A time to sicken and to swoon,
 When Science reaches forth her
 arms
 To feel from world to world, and
 charms
 Her secret from the latest moon?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing:
 Ye never knew the sacred dust:
 I do but sing because I must,
 And pipe but as the linnets sing:

And one is glad; her note is gay,
 For now her little ones have
 ranged;
 And one is sad her note is
 changed,
 Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII.

The path by which we twain did go,
 Which led by tracts that pleased
 us well,
 Thro' four sweet years arose and
 fell,
 From flower to flower, from snow to
 snow:

And we with singing cheer'd the way,
 And, crown'd with all the season
 lent,

From April on to April went,
 And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walk'd began
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
 As we descended following Hope,
 There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,
 And spread his mantle dark and
 cold,
 And wrapt thee formless in the
 fold,
 And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see
 Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,
 And think, that somewhere in the
 waste
 The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
 Or breaking into song by fits,
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,
 The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
 I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I
 came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying, How changed from where
 it ran
 Thro' lands where not a leaf was
 dumb;
 But all the lavish hills would hum
 The murmur of a happy Pan:

When each by turns was guide to each,
 And Fancy light from Fancy
 caught,
 And Thought leapt out to wed
 with Thought
 Ere Thought could wed itself with
 Speech;

And all we met was fair and good,
 And all was good that Time could
 bring,
 And all the secret of the Spring
 Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thickest rang
 To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

And was the day of my delight
 As pure and perfect as I say?
 The very source and fount of Day
 Is dash'd with wandering isles of
 night.

If all was good and fair we met,
 This earth had been the Paradise
 It never look'd to human eyes
 Since our first Sun arose and set.

And is it that the haze of grief
 Makes former gladness loom so
 great ?

The lowness of the present state,
 That sets the past in this relief ?

Or that the past will always win
 A glory from its being far ;
 And orb into the perfect star
 We saw not, when we moved therein ?

XXV.

I know that this was life, — the track
 Whereon with equal feet we
 fared ;
 And then, as now, the day pre-
 pared
 The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
 As light as carrier-birds in air ;
 I loved the weight I had to bear,
 Because it needed help of Love :

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
 When mighty Love would cleave
 in twain
 The lading of a single pain,
 And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

Still onward winds the dreary way ;
 I with it, for I long to prove
 No lapse of moons can canker
 Love,
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
 And goodness, and hath power
 to see
 Within the green the moulder'd
 tree,
 And towers fall'n as soon as built —

Oh, if indeed that eye foresee
 Or see (in Him is no before)
 In more of life true life no more
 And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn
 Breaks hither over Indian seas,
 That shadow waiting with the
 keys,
 To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes
 His license in the field of time,
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
 To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
 The heart that never plighted
 troth

But stagnates in the weeds of
 sloth ;

Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, what'er befall ;
 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
 'Tis better to have loved and lost
 Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.

The time draws near the birth of
 Christ :
 The moon is hid ; the night is still ;
 The Christmas bells from hill to
 hill
 Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
 From far and near, on mead and
 moor,
 Swell out and fail, as if a door
 Were shut between me and the sound :
 Each voice four changes on the wind,
 That now dilate, and now de-
 crease,
 Peace and goodwill, goodwill and
 peace,
 Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
 I almost wish'd no more to wake,
 And that my hold on life would
 break
 Before I heard those bells again .

But they my troubled spirit rule,
 For they controll'd me when a boy ;
 They bring me sorrow touch'd
 with joy,
 The merry merry bells of Yule.

XXIX.

With such compelling cause to grieve
 As daily vexes household peace,
 And chains regret to his decease
 How dare we keep our Christmas-eve ;

Which brings no more a welcome
 guest
 To enrich the threshold of the
 night

With shower'd largess of delight
 In dance and song and game and jest ?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs
 Entwine the cold baptismal font,
 Make one wreath more for Use
 and Wont,
 That guard the portals of the house ;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
 Gray nurses, loving nothing new;
 Why should they miss their
 yearly due
 Before their time? They too will
 die.

XXX.

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas
 hearth;
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gambol'd, making vain pre-
 tence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the
 beech:
 We heard them sweep the winter
 land;
 And in a circle hand-in-hand
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
 A merry song we sang with him
 Last year: impetuously we sang:

We ceased: a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us: surely rest is meet:
 "They rest," we said, "their sleep
 is sweet,"
 And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
 Once more we sang: "They do
 not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
 Nor change to us, although they
 change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gather'd power, yet the
 same,
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from
 night:
 O Father, touch the east, and
 light
 The light that shone when Hope was
 born.

XXXI.

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
 And home to Mary's house re-
 turn'd,
 Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
 To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those
 four days?"
 There lives no record of reply,
 Which telling what it is to die
 Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,
 The streets were fill'd with joyful
 sound,
 A solemn gladness even crown'd
 The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
 He told it not; or something
 seal'd
 The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
 Nor other thought her mind ad-
 mits
 But, he was dead, and there he
 sits,
 And he that brought him back is
 there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
 All other, when her ardent gaze
 Roves from the living brother's
 face,
 And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
 Borne down by gladness so com-
 plete,
 She bows, she bathes the
 Saviour's feet
 With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful
 prayers,
 Whose loves in higher love en-
 dure;
 What souls possess themselves so
 pure,
 Or is their blessedness like theirs?

XXXIII.

O thou that after toil and storm
 Mayst seem to have reach'd a
 purer air,
 Whose faith has centre every-
 where,
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
 Her early Heaven, her happy
 views;
 Nor thou with shadow'd hint con-
 fuse
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good:

Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine!

See thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin,
And ev'n for want of such a type.

XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me
this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty; such as lurks
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I?
'Twere hardly worth my while to
choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent
draws,
To drop head-foremost in the
jaws
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XXXV.

Yet if some voice that man could
trust
Should murmur from the narrow
house,
"The cheeks drop in; the body
bows;
Man dies: nor is there hope in dust:"

Might I not say? "Yet even here,
But for one hour, O Love, I strive
To keep so sweet a thing alive:"
But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,
The sound of streams that swift
or slow
Draw down Æonian hills, and
sow
The dust of continents to be;

And Love would answer with a sigh,
"The sound of that forgetful
shore
Will change my sweetness more
and more,
Half-dead to know that I shall die."

O me, what profits it to put
An idle case? If Death were
seen

At first as Death, Love had not
been,
Or been in narrowest working shut,
Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
Had bruised the herb and crush'd
the grape,
And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

XXXVI.

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall
fail,
When truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and
wrought
With human hands the creed of
creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought;

Which he may read that binds the
sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the
grave,
And those wild eyes that watch
the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.

Urania speaks with darken'd brow:
"Thou pratest here where thou
art least;
This faith has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou.

"Go down beside thy native rill,
On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
About the ledges of the hill."

And my Melpomene replies,
A touch of shame upon her cheek:
"I am not worthy ev'n to speak
Of thy prevailing mysteries;

"For I am but an earthly Muse,
And owning but a little art
To lull with song an aching heart,
And render human love his dues;

"But brooding on the dear one dead,
And all he said of things divine,
(And dear to me as sacred wine
To dying lips is all he said),

"I murmur'd, as I came along,
Of comfort clasp'd in truth re-
veal'd;
And loiter'd in the master's field,
And darken'd sanctities with song."

XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,
Tho' always under alter'd skies
The purple from the distance dies,
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
The herald melodies of spring,
But in the songs I love to sing
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
Survive in spirits render'd free,
Then are these songs I sing of
thee
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

Old warder of these buried bones,
And answering now my random
stroke
With fruitful cloud and living
smoke,
Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless
head,
To thee too comes the golden hour
When flower is feeling after
flower;
But Sorrow — fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of
men, —
What whisper'd from her lying
lips?
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,
And passes into gloom again.

XL.

Could we forget the widow'd hour
And look on Spirits breathed
away,
As on a maiden in the day
When first she wears her orange-
flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth
rise
To take her latest leave of home,
And hopes and light regrets that
come
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful joys the father move,
And tears are on the mother's
face,
As parting with a long embrace
She enters other realms of love;

Her office there to rear, to teach,
Becoming as is meet and fit
A link among the days, to knit
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In those great offices that suit
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!
How often shall her old fireside
Be cheer'd with tidings of the
bride,
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have
told,
And bring her babe, and make
her boast,
Till even those that miss'd her
most
Shall count new things as dear as old:

But thou and I have shaken hands,
Till growing winters lay me low;
My paths are in the fields I know,
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XLI.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss
Did ever rise from high to higher;
As mounts the heavenward altar-
fire,
As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

But thou art turn'd to something
strange,
And I have lost the links that
bound
Thy changes; here upon the
ground,
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be —
That I could wing my will with
might
To leap the grades of life and
light,
And flash at once, my friend, to thee.

For tho' my nature rarely yields
To that vague fear implied in
death;
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
The howlings from forgotten fields;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
An inner trouble I behold,
A spectral doubt which makes me
cold,
That I shall be thy mate no more, ¹

Tho' following with an upward mind
The wonders that have come to
thee,

Thro' all the secular to-be,
But evermore a life behind.

XLII.

I vex my heart with fancies dim :
He still outstript me in the race ;
It was but unity of place
That made me dream I rank'd with him.

And so may Place retain us still,
And he the much-beloved again,
A lord of large experience, train
To riper growth the mind and will :

And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves but knows
not, reaps

A truth from one that loves and
knows ?

XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its interval gloom
In some long trance should slumber on ;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the color of the flower :

So then were nothing lost to man ;
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began ;

And love will last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in
Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead ?
For here the man is more and
more ;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.

The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,
And yet perhaps the hoarding
sense
Gives out at times (he knows not
whence)
A little flash, a mystic hint ;

And in the long harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethean
springs),
May some dim touch of earthly
things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O turn thee round, resolve the
doubt ;
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLV.

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I :"

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I," and
"me,"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may
begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him
in
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their
due,
Had man to learn himself anew
Beyond the second birth of Death.

XLVI.

We ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and
flower,
Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it : there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the
tomb,
But clear from marge to marge
shall bloom
The eternal landscape of the past ;

A lifelong tract of time reveal'd ;
The fruitful hours of still increase ;
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.

O Love, thy province were not large,
A bounded field, nor stretching
far ;
Look also, Love, a brooding star,
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVII.

That each, who seems a separate
whole,
Should move his rounds, and fus-
ing all
The skirts of self again, should
fall
Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
 Eternal form shall still divide
 The eternal soul from all beside;
 And I shall know him when we meet:

And we shall sit at endless feast,
 Enjoying each the other's good:
 What vaster dream can hit the
 mood
 Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,
 Before the spirits fade away,
 Some landing-place, to clasp and
 say,
 "Farewell! We lose ourselves in
 light."

XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
 Were taken to be such as closed
 Grave doubts and answers here
 proposed,
 Then these were such as men might
 scorn:

Her care is not to part and prove;
 She takes, when harsher moods
 remit,
 What slender shade of doubt may
 fit,

And makes it vassal unto love:

And hence, indeed, she sports with
 words,
 But better serves a wholesome
 law,
 And holds it sin and shame to
 draw

The deepest measure from the chords:

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
 But rather loosens from the lip
 Short swallow-flights of song, that
 dip

Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLIX.

From art, from nature, from the
 schools,
 Let random influences glance,
 Like light in many a shiver'd lance
 That breaks about the dappled pools:

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
 The fancy's tenderest eddy
 breathe,
 The slightest air of song shall
 breathe

To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
 But blame not thou the winds that
 make

The seeming-wanton ripple break,
 The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
 Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,
 Whose muffled motions blindly
 drown
 The bases of my life in tears.

L.

Be near me when my light is low,
 When the blood creeps, and the
 nerves prick
 And tingle; and the heart is sick,
 And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
 Is rack'd with pangs that conquer
 trust;
 And Time, a maniac scattering
 dust,
 And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring,
 That lay their eggs, and sting
 and sing
 And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
 To point the term of human strife,
 And on the low dark verge of life
 The twilight of eternal day.

LI.

Do we indeed desire the dead
 Should still be near us at our side?
 Is there no baseness we would
 hide?
 No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
 I had such reverence for his
 blame,
 See with clear eye some hidden
 shame
 And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue:
 Shall love be blamed for want of
 faith?
 There must be wisdom with great
 Death:
 The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:
 Ye watch, like God, the rolling
 hours
 With larger other eyes than ours,
 To make allowance for us all.

LII.

I cannot love thee as I ought,
 For love reflects the thing be-
 loved;
 My words are only words, and
 moved
 Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou my plaintive
song,"
The Spirit of true love replied ;
"Thou canst not move me from
thy side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears ?
What record ? not the sinless
years
That breathed beneath the Syrian
blue :

"So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dash'd with flecks of
sin.
Abide : thy wealth is gather'd in,
When Time hath sunder'd shell from
pearl."

LIII.

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish
noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and
green :

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been
sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had
grown
The grain by which a man may live ?

Or, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a
truth
To those that eddy round and round ?

Hold thou the good : define it well :
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark,
and be
Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be de-
stroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile com-
plete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;
I can but trust that good shall
fall
At last — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night :
An infant crying for the light :
And with no language but a cry.

LV.

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likeliest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil
dreams ?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of
cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and
grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and
call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

"So careful of the type ?" but no.
From scarp'd cliff and quarried
stone
She cries, "A thousand types are
gone :
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :
I bring to life, I bring to death :
The spirit does but mean the
breath :
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so
fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry
skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless
prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law —

Tho' Nature, red in tooth and
claw
With ravine, shriek'd against his
creed —

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the
Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more ? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the
prime,
That tare each other in their
slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !
O for thy voice to soothe and
bless !
What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII.

Peace ; come away : the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song :
Peace ; come away : we do him
wrong
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come ; let us go : your cheeks are
pale ;
But half my life I leave behind :
Methinks my friend is richly
shrined ;
But I shall pass ; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
One set slow bell will seem to toll
The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
Eternal greetings to the dead ;
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
"Adieu, adieu" for evermore.

LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell :
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
Of hearts that beat from day to
day,
Half-conscious of their dying
clay,
And those cold crypts where they
shall cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Wherefore
grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless
tear ?

Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

LIX.

O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me
No casual mistress, but a wife,
My bosom-friend and half of
life ;
As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
And put thy harsher moods aside,
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,
Nor will it lessen from to-day ;
But I'll have leave at times to
play
As with the creature of my love ;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,
With so much hope for years to
come,
That, howsoe'er I know thee, some
Could hardly tell what name were
thine.

LX.

He past ; a soul of nobler tone :
My spirit loved and loves him
yet,
Like some poor girl whose heart
is set
On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
She finds the baseness of her lot,
Half jealous of she knows not
what,
And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn ;
She sighs amid her narrow days,
Moving about the household
ways,
In that dark house where she was
born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,
And tease her till the day draws
by :
At night she weeps, "How vain
am I !
How should he love a thing so low ?"

LXI.

If, in thy second state sublime,
Thy ransom'd reason change
replies
With all the circle of the wise,
The perfect flower of human time ;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,
 How dimly character'd and slight,
 How dwarf'd a growth of cold and
 night,
 How blanch'd with darkness must I
 grow!

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
 Where thy first form was made a
 man;
 I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor
 can
 The soul of Shakspeare love thee more.

LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast
 Could make thee somewhat blench
 or fail,
 Then be my love an idle tale,
 And fading legend of the past;

And thou, as one that once declined,
 When he was little more than boy,
 On some unworthy heart with joy,
 But lives to wed an equal mind;

And breathes a novel world, the while
 His other passion wholly dies,
 Or in the light of deeper eyes
 Is matter for a flying smile.

LXIII.

Yet pity for a horse o'er-driven,
 And love in which my hound has
 part,
 Can hang no weight upon my
 heart
 In its assumptions up to heaven;

And I am so much more than these,
 As thou, perchance, art more than
 I,
 And yet I spare them sympathy,
 And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I weep,
 As, unto vaster motions bound,
 The circuits of thine orbit round
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

Dost' thou look back on what hath
 been,
 As some divinely gifted man,
 Whose life in low estate began
 And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
 And grasps the skirts of happy
 chance,
 And breasts the blows of circum-
 stance,
 And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known
 And lives to clutch the golden
 keys,
 To mould a mighty state's decrees,
 And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning
 slope
 The pillar of a people's hope,
 The centre of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
 When all his active powers are
 still,
 A distant dearth in the hill,
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
 While yet beside its vocal springs
 He play'd at counsellors and kings,
 With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
 And reaps the labor of his hands,
 Or in the furrow musing stands;
 "Does my old friend remember me?"

LXV.

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt;
 I lull a fancy trouble-tost
 With "Love's too precious to be
 lost,
 A little grain shall not be spilt."

And in that solace can I sing,
 Till out of painful phases wrought
 There flutters up a happy thought,
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing:

Since we deserved the name of friends,
 And thine effect so lives in me,
 A part of mine may live in thee
 And move thee on to noble ends.

LXVI.

You thought my heart too far diseased;
 You wonder when my fancies play
 To find me gay among the gay,
 Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crost,
 Which makes a desert in the mind,
 Has made me kindly with my
 kind,
 And like to him whose sight is lost;

Whose feet are guided thro' the land,
 Whose jest among his friends is
 free,
 Who takes the children on his
 knee,
 And winds their curls about his hand:

He plays with threads, he beats his
 chair
 For pastime, dreaming of the sky;

His inner day can never die,
His night of loss is always there.

LXVII.

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;
From off my bed the moonlight
dies ;



*"I found a wood with thorny boughs,
I took the thorns to bind my brows."*

And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church like a
ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVIII.

When in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times
my breath ;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother,
knows not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with
dew,
And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not
why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :

But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXIX.

I dream'd there would be Spring no
more,
That Nature's ancient power was
lost:
The streets were black with smoke
and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door:

I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny
boughs:
I took the thorns to bind my
brows,
I wore them like a civic crown:

I met with scoffs, I met with scorn
From youth and babe and hoary
hairs:
They call'd me in the public
squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns:

They call'd me fool, they call'd me
child:
I found an angel of the night;
The voice was low, the look was
bright;
He look'd upon my crown and smiled:

He reach'd the glory of a hand,
That seem'd to touch it into leaf:
The voice was not the voice of
grief,
The words were hard to understand.

LXX.

I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to
paint
The face I know; the hues are
faint
And mix with hollow masks of night;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons
wrought,
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
A hand that points, and palled
shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;

And crowds that stream from yawn-
ing doors,
And shoals of pucker'd faces
drive;
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
And lazy lengths on boundless shores;

Till all at once beyond the will
I hear a wizard music roll,
And thro' a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXXI.

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and
trance
And madness, thou hast forged
at last
A night-long Present of the Past
In which we went thro' summer
France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul?
Then bring an opiate trebly
strong,
Drug down the blindfold sense of
wrong
That so my pleasure may be whole;

While now we talk as once we talk'd
Of men and minds, the dust of
change,
The days that grow to something
strange,
In walking as of old we walk'd

Beside the river's wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain
ridge,
The cataract flashing from the
bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXXII.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar
white,
And lash with storm the streaming
pane?

Day, when my crown'd estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sicken'd every living
bloom,
And blurr'd the splendor of the sun;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
With thy quick tears that make
the rose
Pull sideways, and the daisy close
Her crimson fringes to the shower;

Who might'st have heaved a windless
flame
Up the deep East, or, whispering,
play'd
A chequer-work of beam and
shade
Along the hills, yet look'd the same.

As wan, as chill, as wild as now;
Day, mark'd as with some hideous
crime,
When the dark hand struck down
thro' time,
And cancell'd nature's best: but thou,

Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd
brows
Thro' clouds that drench the
morning star,
And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf
afar,
And sow the sky with flying boughs,
And up thy vault with roaring sound
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous
day;
Touch thy dull goal of joyless
gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the
ground.

LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of
thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
The head hath miss'd an earthly
wreath:
I curse not nature, no, nor death;
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds:
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul
exults,
And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a
name.

LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and
more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to some one of his race:

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and
know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has
made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXV.

I leave thy praises unexpress'd
In verse that brings myself relief,
And by the measure of my grief
I leave thy greatness to be guess'd;

What practice howsoe'er expert
In fitting aptest words to things,
Or voice the richest-toned that
sings,
Hath power to give thee as thou wert?

I care not in these fading days
To raise a cry that lasts not long,
And round thee with the breeze
of song
To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,
And, while we breathe beneath the
sun,
The world which credits what is
done
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame;
But somewhere, out of human
view,
Whate'er thy hands are set to do
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

LXXVI.

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,
And in a moment set thy face
Where all the starry heavens of
space
Are sharpen'd to a needle's end;

Take wings of foresight; lighten thro'
The secular abyss to come,
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
Before the mouldering of a yew;

And if the matin songs, that woke
The darkness of our planet, last,
Thine own shall wither in the vast,
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy
bowers
With fifty Mays, thy songs are
vain;
And what are they when these
remain
The ruin'd shells of hollow towers?

LXXVII.

What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him, who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives,
that lie
Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's
locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that
tells

A grief, then changed to some-
thing else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darken'd ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than
fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXVIII.

Again at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas
hearth;
The silent snow possess'd the
earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve:

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
Again our ancient games had
place,
The mimic picture's breathing
grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-
blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
No single tear, no mark of pain:
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
No — mixt with all this mystic
frame,
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXIX.

"More than my brothers are to me," —
Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
I know thee of what force thou
art
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in Nature's mint;
And hill and wood and field did
print
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
Thro' all his eddying coves, the
same
All winds that roam the twilight
came
In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
One lesson from one book we
learn'd,

Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet
turn'd
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
But he was rich where I was poor,
And he supplied my want the more
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,
That holy Death ere Arthur died
Had moved me kindly from his
side,
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
The grief my loss in him had
wrought,
A grief as deep as life or thought,
But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain;
I hear the sentence that he speaks;
He bears the burthen of the weeks
But turns his burthen into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free;
And, influence-rich to soothe and
save,
Unused example from the grave
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXXI.

Could I have said while he was here,
"My love shall now no further
range;
There cannot come a mellow
change,
For now is love mature in ear."

Love, then, had hope of richer store:
What end is here to my com-
plaint?
This haunting whisper makes me
faint,
"More years had made me love thee
more."

But Death returns an answer sweet:
"My sudden frost was sudden
gain,
And gave all ripeness to the grain,
It might have drawn from after-heat."

LXXXII.

I wage not any feud with Death
For changes wrought on form and
face;
No lower life that earth's embrace
May breed with him, can fright my
faith.

Eternal process moving on,
 From state to state the spirit
 walks;
 And these are but the shatter'd
 stalks,
 Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare
 The use of virtue out of earth:
 I know transplanted human worth
 Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
 The wrath that garners in my
 heart;
 He put our lives so far apart
 We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXIII.

Dip down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long;
 Thou doest expectant nature
 wrong;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded
 noons,
 Thy sweetness from its proper
 place?
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
 The little speedwell's darling blue,
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
 That longs to burst a frozen bud
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

When I contemplate all alone
 The life that had been thine below,
 And fix my thoughts on all the
 glow
 To which thy crescent would have
 grown;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
 A central warmth diffusing bliss
 In glance and smile, and clasp
 and kiss,
 On all the branches of thy blood;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine;
 For now the day was drawing on,
 When thou should'st link thy life
 with one
 Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled "Uncle" on my knee;
 But that remorseless iron hour
 Made cypress of her orange flower,
 Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
 To clap their cheeks, to call them
 mine.

I see their unborn faces shine
 Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honor'd guest,
 Thy partner in the flowery walk
 Of letters, genial table-talk,
 Or deep dispute, and graceful jest;

While now thy prosperous labor fills
 The lips of men with honest praise,
 And sun by sun the happy days
 Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair;
 And all the train of bounteous
 hours
 Conduct by paths of growing
 powers,
 To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
 Her lavish mission richly
 wrought,
 Leaving great legacies of thought,
 Thy spirit should fall from off the
 globe;

What time mine own might also flee,
 As link'd with thine in love and
 fate,
 And, hovering o'er the dolorous
 strait
 To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
 And He that died in Holy Land
 Would reach us out the shining
 hand,
 And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?
 Ah, backward fancy, wherefore
 wake
 The old bitterness again, and
 break
 The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and
 pall,
 I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
 'Tis better to have loved and lost,
 Than never to have loved at all —

O true in word, and tried in deed,
 Demanding, so to bring relief
 To this which is our common
 grief,
 What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above
 Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;

And whether love for him have
drain'd
My capabilities of love ;

Your words have virtue such as draws
A faithful answer from the
breast,
Thro' light reproaches, half ex-
prest,
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
Till on mine ear this message
falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal
state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome
there ;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain
fresh
All knowledge that the sons of
flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
Whose life, whose thoughts were
little worth,
To wander on a darken'd earth,
Where all things round me breathed
of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
O heart, with kindest motion
warm,
O sacred essence, other form,
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul !

Yet none could better know than I,
How much of act at human hands
The sense of human will demands
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
His being working in mine own,
The footsteps of his life in mine ;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
With gifts of grace, that might
express
All-comprehensive tenderness,
All-subtilizing intellect :

And so my passion hath not swerved
To works of weakness, but I find
An image comforting the mind,
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
That loved to handle spiritual
strife,
Diffused the shock thro' all my
life,
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
For other friends that once I met ;
Nor can it suit me to forget
The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
To mourn for any overmuch ;
I, the divided half of such
A friendship as had master'd Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
Eternal, separate from fears :
The all-assuming months and
years
Can take no part away from this :

But Summer on the steaming floods,
And Spring that swells the nar-
row brooks,
And Autumn, with a noise of
rooks,
That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
Recalls, in change of light or
gloom,
My old affection of the tomb,
And my prime passion in the grave :

My old affection of the tomb,
A part of stillness, yearns to
speak :
" Arise, and get thee forth and
seek
A friendship for the years to come.

" I watch thee from the quiet shore ;
Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;
But in dear words of human
speech
We two communicate no more."

And I, " Can clouds of nature stain
The starry clearness of the free ?
How is it ? Canst thou feel for
me
Some painless sympathy with pain ? "

And lightly does the whisper fall ;
" 'Tis hard for thee to fathom
this ;
I triumph in conclusive bliss,
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead ;
Or so methinks the dead would
say ;

Or so shall grief with symbols
play
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled' end,
That these things pass, and I shall
prove
A meeting somewhere, love with
love,
I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
I, clasping brother-hands, aver
I could not, if I would, transfer
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
The promise of the golden hours?
First love, first friendship, equal
powers,
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
That beats within a lonely place,
That yet remembers his embrace,
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
Quite in the love of what is gone,
But seeks to beat in time with one
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
The primrose of the later year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous
gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
And shadowing down the horned
flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy
breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt
and Death,

III brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

LXXXVII.

I past beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown;

I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls;

And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs
make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophet blazon'd on the panes;

And caught once more the distant
shout,
The measured pulse of racing
oars
Among the willows; paced the
shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same; and
last

Up that long walk of limes I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door:
I linger'd; all within was noise
Of songs, and clapping hands,
and boys
That crash'd the glass and beat the
floor;

Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and
art,
And labor, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the
string;
And one would pierce an outer
ring,
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,
Would cleave the mark. A wil-
ling ear
We lent him. Who, but hung to
hear

The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and
grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we
saw

The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXXXVIII.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' the budded
quicks,

O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes employ

Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief

Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I — my harp would prelude
woe —

I cannot all command the strings ;
The glory of the sum of things
Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXIX.

Witch-elms that counterchange the
floor

Of this flat lawn with dusk and
bright ;

And thou, with all thy breadth
and height
Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How often, hither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows
fair,

And shook to all the liberal air
The dust and din and steam of town :

He brought an eye for all he saw ;
He mixt in all our simple sports ;
They pleased him, fresh from
brawling courts

And dusty purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
Immantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking thro' the heat :

O sound to rout the brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in morning
dew,

The gust that round the garden
flew,
And tumbled half the mellowing
pears !

O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him, as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon
A guest, or happy sister, sung,
Or here she brought the harp and
flung

A ballad to the brightening moon :

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
And break the lifelong summer
day

With banquet in the distant woods ;

Whereat we glanced from theme to
theme,

Discuss'd the books to love or
hate,

Or touch'd the changes of the
state,
Or threaded some Socratic dream ;

But if I praised the busy town,
He loved to rail against it still,
For "ground in yonder social
mill

We rub each other's angles down,

"And merge" he said "in form and
gloss

The picturesque of man and
man."

We talk'd : the stream beneath
us ran,
The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,

Or cool'd within the glooming wave ;
And last, returning from afar,
Before the crimson-circled star
Had fall'n into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
We heard behind the woodbine
veil

The milk that bubbled in the pail,
And buzzings of the honied hours.

XC.

He tasted love with half his mind,
Nor ever drank the inviolate
spring

Where nighest heaven, who first
could fling
This bitter seed among mankind ;

That could the dead, whose dying
eyes

Were closed with wail, resume
their life,

They would but find in child and
wife

An iron welcome when they rise :

'Twas well, indeed, when warm with
wine,

To pledge them with a kindly
tear,

To talk them o'er, to wish them
here,

To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who past away,
Behold their brides in other
hands ;

The hard heir strides about their
lands,

And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, tho' their sons were none of
these,

Not less the yet-loved sire would
make
Confusion worse than death, and
shake
The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me:
Whatever change the years have
wrought,
I find not yet one lonely thought
That cries against my wish for thee.

XCI.

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted
thrush;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March;

Come, wear the form by which I
know
Thy spirit in time among thy
peers;
The hope of unaccomplish'd years
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When a summer's hourly-mellowing
change
May breathe, with many roses
sweet,
Upon the thousand waves of
wheat,
That ripple round the lonely grange;

Come: not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth
warm,
Come, beauteous in thine after
form,
And like a finer light in light.

XCII.

If any vision should reveal
Thy likeness, I might count it
vain
As but the canker of the brain;
Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
Together in the days behind,
I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
A fact within the coming year;
And tho' the months, revolving
near,
Should prove the phantom-warning
true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.

XCIII.

I shall not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native
land
Where first he walk'd when claspt in
clay?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may
come
Where all the nerve of sense is
numb;
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in un conjectured bliss,
O, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter; hear
The wish too strong for words to
name;
That in this blindness of the
frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold
Should be the man whose thought
would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst
say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest;

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,
For underfoot the herb was dry;
And genial warmth; and o'er the
sky
The silvery haze of summer drawn;

And calm that let the tapers burn
Unwavering; not a cricket chirr'd:
The brook alone far-off was heard,
And on the board the fluttering urn:

And bats went round in fragrant skies,
 And wheel'd or lit the filmy
 shapes
 That haunt the dusk, with ermine
 capes

And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;

While now we sang old songs that
 peal'd

From knoll to knoll, where,
 couch'd at ease,

The white kine glimmer'd, and
 the trees

Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me
 and night,

And in the house light after light
 Went out, and I was all alone,

A hunger seized my heart ; I read
 Of that glad year which once had
 been,

In those fall'n leaves which kept
 their green,

The noble letters of the dead :

And strangely on the silence broke
 The silent-speaking words, and
 strange

Was love's dumb cry defying
 change

To test his worth ; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell
 On doubts that drive the coward
 back,

And keen thro' wordy snares to
 track

Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
 The dead man touch'd me from
 the past,

And all at once it seem'd at last
 The living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and
 whirl'd

About empyreal heights of
 thought,

And came on that which is, and
 caught

The deep pulsations of the world,

Æonian music measuring out

The steps of Time — the shocks
 of Chance —

The blows of Death. At length
 my trance

Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with
 doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to
 frame

In matter-moulded forms of
 speech,
 Or ev'n for intellect to reach
 Thro' memory that which I became :

Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
 The knolls once more where,
 couch'd at ease,

The white kine glimmer'd, and
 the trees

Laid their dark arms about the field :

And suck'd from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering fresher overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms,
 and swung

The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said

"The dawn, the dawn," and died
 away ;

And East and West, without a
 breath,

Mixt their dim lights, like life
 and death,

To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-
 blue eyes

Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew

In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true :

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.

There lives more faith in honest
 doubt,

Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,

He would not make his judgment
 blind,

He faced the spectres of the mind
 And laid them : thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own ;

And Power was with him in the
 night,

Which makes the darkness and
 the light,

And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,

While Israel made their gods of
gold,
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and
trees;
He finds on misty mountain-
ground
His own vast shadow glory-
crown'd;
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life —
I look'd on these and thought of
thee
In vastness and in mystery,
And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two — they dwelt with eye on
eye,
Their hearts of old have beat in
tune,
Their meetings made December
June,
Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away;
The days she never can forget
Are earnest that he loves her yet,
Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,
He loves her yet, she will not weep,
Tho' rapt in matters dark and
deep
He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,
He reads the secret of the star,
He seems so near and yet so far,
He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
A wither'd violet is her bliss:
She knows not what his great-
ness is,
For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
Of early faith and plighted vows;
She knows but matters of the
house,
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and
wise,
She dwells on him with faithful
eyes,
"I cannot understand: I love."

XCVIII.

You leave us: you will see the Rhine,
And those fair hills I sail'd below,
When I was there with him; and
go

By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath,
That City. All her splendor
seems
No livelier than the wisp that
gleams
On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
Enwind her isles, unmark'd of
me:
I have not seen, I will not see
Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts
The birth, the bridal; friend from
friend
Is oftener parted, fathers bend
Above more graves, a thousand wants

Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey
By each cold hearth, and sad-
ness flings
Her shadow on the blaze of
kings:
And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
With statelier progress to and
fro
The double tides of chariots flow
By park and suburb under brown

Of lustier leaves; nor more content,
He told me, lives in any crowd,
When all is gay with lamps, and
loud
With sport and song, in booth and
tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain;
And wheels the circled dance, and
breaks
The rocket molten into flakes
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

XCIX.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
So loud with voices of the birds,
So thick with lowings of the
herds,
Day, when I lost the flower of men;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red
On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles
fast
By meadows breathing of the
past,
And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves
 A song that slights the coming
 care,
 And Autumn laying here and
 there
 A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
 To myriads on the genial earth,
 Memories of bridal, or of birth,
 And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,
 Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
 To-day they count as kindred
 souls ;
 They know me not, but mourn with
 me.

C.

I climb the hill : from end to end
 Of all the landscape underneath,
 I find no place that does not
 breathe
 Some gracious memory of my friend ;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
 Or low morass and whispering
 reed,
 Or simple stile from mead to
 mead,
 Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
 That hears the latest linnet trill,
 Nor quarry trench'd along the
 hill
 And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
 Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
 To left and right thro' meadowy
 curves,
 That feed the mothers of the flock ;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,
 And each reflects a kindlier day ;
 And, leaving these, to pass away,
 I think once more he seems to die.

CI.

Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall
 sway,
 The tender blossom flutter down,
 Unloved, that beech will gather
 brown,
 This maple burn itself away ;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,
 Ray round with flames her disk
 of seed,
 And many a rose-carnation feed
 With summer spice the humming air ;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
 The brook shall babble down the
 plain,
 At noon or when the lesser wain
 Is twisting round the polar star ;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
 And flood the haunts of hern and
 crake ;
 Or into silver arrows break
 The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild
 A fresh association blow,
 And year by year the landscape
 grow
 Familiar to the stranger's child ;

As year by year the laborer tills
 His wonted glebe, or lops the
 glades ;
 And year by year our memory
 fades
 From all the circle of the hills.

CII.

We leave the well-beloved place
 Where first we gazed upon the
 sky ;
 The roofs, that heard our earliest
 cry,
 Will shelter one of stranger race.

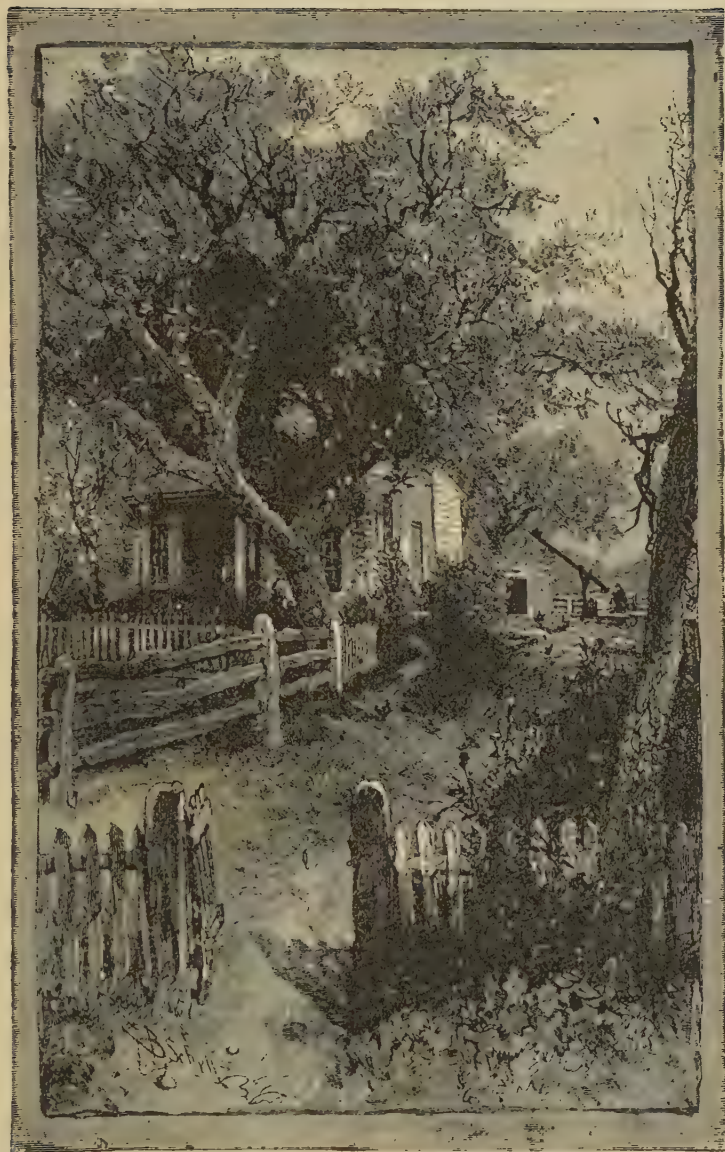
We go, but ere we go from home,
 As down the garden-walks I
 move,
 Two spirits of a diverse love
 Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, "Here thy boyhood
 sung
 Long since its matin song, and
 heard
 The low love-language of the bird
 In native hazels tassel-hung."

The other answers, "Yea, but here
 Thy feet have stray'd in after
 hours
 With thy lost friend among the
 bowers,
 And this hath made them trebly
 dear."

These two have striven half the day,
 And each prefers his separate
 claim,
 Poor rivals in a losing game,
 That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go : my feet are set
 To leave the pleasant fields and
 farms ;
 They mix in one another's arms
 To one pure image of regret.



*"We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky."*

CIII.

On that last night before we went
From out the doors where I was
bred,
I dream'd a vision of the dead,
Which left my after-morn content.

Methought I dwelt within a hall,
And maidens with me: distant
hills
From hidden summits fed with
rills
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang.
 They sang of what is wise and
 good
 And graceful. In the centre
 stood
 A statue veil'd, to which they sang;

And which, tho' veil'd, was known to
 me,
 The shape of him I loved, and
 love
 For ever: then flew in a dove
 And brought a summons from the
 sea:

And when they learnt that I must go
 They wept and wail'd, but led the
 way
 To where a little shallop lay
 At anchor in the flood below;

And on by many a level mead,
 And shadowing bluff that made
 the banks,
 We glided winding under ranks
 Of iris, and the golden reed;

And still as vaster grew the shore
 And roll'd the floods in grander
 space,
 The maidens gather'd strength
 and grace
 And presence, lordlier than before;

And I myself, who sat apart
 And watch'd them, wax'd in every
 limb;
 I felt the thews of Anakim,
 The pulses of a Titan's heart;

As one would sing the death of war,
 And one would chant the history
 Of that great race, which is to
 be,
 And one the shaping of a star;

Until the forward-creeping tides
 Began to foam, and we to draw
 From deep to deep, to where we
 saw
 A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck,
 But thrice as large as man he bent
 To greet us. Up the side I went,
 And fell in silence on his neck:

Whereat those maidens with one mind
 Bewail'd their lot; I did them
 wrong:

"We served thee here," they said,
 "so long,
 And wilt thou leave us now behind?"

So rapt I was, they could not win
 An answer from my lips, but he

Replying, "Enter likewise ye
 And go with us:" they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep
 A music out of sheet and shroud,
 We steer'd her toward a crimson
 cloud
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CIV.

The time draws near the birth of
 Christ;
 The moon is hid, the night is still;
 A single church below the hill
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
 In lands where not a memory
 strays,
 Nor landmark breathes of other
 days,
 But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CV.

To-night ungather'd let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand:
 We live within the stranger's land,
 And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust is left alone
 And silent under other snows:
 There in due time the woodbine
 blows,
 The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse
 The genial hour with mask and
 mime;
 For change of place, like growth
 of time,
 Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,
 By which our lives are chiefly
 proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm;
 For who would keep an ancient
 form
 Thro' which the spirit breathes no
 more?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;
 Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be
 blown;
 No dance, no motion, save alone
 What lightens in the lucid east

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
 Long sleeps the summer in the
 seed;
 Run out your measured arcs, and
 lead
 The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the
 snow:
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no
 more;
 Ring out the feud of rich and
 poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the
 times;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful
 rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and
 blood,
 The civic slander and the spite;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of
 gold;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier
 hand;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CVII.

It is the day when he was born,
 A bitter day that early sank
 Behind a purple-frosty bank
 Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves
 To deck the banquet. Fiercely
 flies

The blast of North and East, and
 ice
 Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
 To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
 Above the wood which grides and
 clangs
 Its leafless ribs and iron horns

Together, in the drifts that pass
 To darken on the rolling brine
 That breaks the coast. But fetch
 the wine,
 Arrange the board and brim the glass;

Bring in great logs and let them lie,
 To make a solid core of heat;
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
 Of all things ev'n as he were by;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
 With books and music, surely we
 Will drink to him, whate'er he be,
 And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVIII.

I will not shut me from my kind,
 And, lest I stiffen into stone,
 I will not eat my heart alone,
 Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,
 And vacant yearning, tho' with
 might
 To scale the heaven's highest
 height,
 Or dive below the wells of Death?

What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting
 hymns?
 And on the depths of death there
 swims
 The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
 Of sorrow under human skies:
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us
 wise,
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CIX.

Heart-affluence in discursive talk
 From household fountains never
 dry;
 The critic clearness of an eye,
 That saw thro' all the Muses' walk;

Seraphic intellect and force
 To seize and throw the doubts of
 man;
 Impassion'd logic, which outran
 The hearer in its fiery course;

High nature amorous of the good,
 But touch'd with no ascetic
 gloom;
 And passion pure in snowy bloom
 Thro' all the years of April blood;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
 Of freedom in her regal seat
 Of England; not the schoolboy
 heat,
 The blind hysterics of the Celt;

And manhood fused with female grace
 In such a sort, the child would
 twine
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,
 And find his comfort in thy face;

All these have been, and thee mine
 eyes
 Have look'd on: if they look'd
 in vain,
 My shame is greater who remain,
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,
 The men of rathe and riper years:
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
 The proud was half disarm'd of
 pride,
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side
 To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
 The flippant put himself to school
 And heard thee, and the brazen
 fool
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why;

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,
 And felt thy triumph was as mine;
 And loved them more, that they
 were thine,
 The graceful tact, the Christian art;

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,
 But mine the love that will not
 tire,
 And, born of love, the vague
 desire
 That spurs an imitative will.

CXI.

The churl in spirit, up or down
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,
 To him who grasps a golden ball,
 By blood a king, at heart a clown;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
 His want in forms for fashion's
 sake,

Will let his coltish nature break
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale:

For who can always act? but he,
 To whom a thousand memories
 call,
 Not being less but more than all
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and
 join'd
 Each office of the social hour
 To noble manners, as the flower
 And native growth of noble mind;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,
 Drew in the expression of an eye,
 Where God and Nature met in light;

And thus he bore without abuse
 The grand old name of gentleman,
 Defamed by every charlatan,
 And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXII.

High wisdom holds my wisdom less,
 That I, who gaze with temperate
 eyes
 On glorious insufficiencies,
 Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room
 Of all my love, art reason why
 I seem to cast a careless eye
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou? some novel
 power
 Sprang up for ever at a touch,
 And hope could never hope too
 much,
 In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,
 And tracts of calm from tempest
 made,
 And world-wide fluctuation sway'd
 In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

CXIII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps
 with thee
 Which not alone had guided me,
 But served the seasons that may rise;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen
 In intellect, with force and skill
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil —
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have
 been:

A life in civic action warm,
 A soul on highest mission sent,

A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming, when the time has
birth,

A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and
go,

With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with
cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who
shall rail

Against her beauty? May she
mix

With men and prosper! Who
shall fix

Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire:
She sets her forward countenance
And leaps into the future chance,
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—
She cannot fight the fear of death.
What is she, cut from love and
faith,

But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst
All barriers in her onward race
For power. Let her know her
place;

She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain; and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child:

For she is earthly of the mind,
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
O, friend, who camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
Who grewest not alone in power
And knowledge, but by year and
hour

In reverence and in charity.

CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of
quick

About the flowering squares, and
thick

By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the
vale,

And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change
their sky

To build and brood; that live their
lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too; and my re-
gret

Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keener in sweet April
wakes,

And meets the year, and gives
and takes

The colors of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry thro' the sense to hearten
trust

In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone;
And that dear voice, I once have
known,

Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
For days of happy commune
dead;

Less yearning for the friendship
fled,

Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXVII.

O days and hours, your work is this
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss:

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet;
And unto meeting when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that
steals,

And every kiss of toothed wheels,
And all the courses of the suns.

CXVIII.

Contemplate all this work of Time,
The giant laboring in his youth;
Nor dream of human love and
truth,
As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random
forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic
storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime
to clime,
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place,
If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course,
and show
That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning
fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual
feast;
Move upward, working out the
beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

CXIX.

Doors, where my heart was used to
beat
So quickly, not as one that weeps
I come once more; the city sleeps;
I smell the meadow in the street;

I hear a chirp of birds; I see
Betwixt the black fronts long-
withdrawn
A light-blue lane of early dawn,
And think of early days and thee,

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,
And bright the friendship of
thine eye;

And in my thoughts with scarce
a sigh
I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXX.

I trust I have not wasted breath:
I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with
Death;

Not only cunning casts in clay:
Let Science prove we are, and
then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood
shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was *born* to other things.

CXXI.

Sad Hesper o'er the buried sun
And ready, thou, to die with him,
Thou watchest all things ever
dim
And dimmer, and a glory done:

The team is loosen'd from the wain,
The boat is drawn upon the shore;
Thou listenest to the closing door,
And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
By thee the world's great work is
heard
Beginning, and the wakeful bird;
Behind thee comes the greater light:

The market boat is on the stream,
And voices hail it from the
brink;
Thou hear'st the village hammer
clink,
And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
For what is one, the first, the last,
Thou, like my present and my
past,
Thy place is changed; thou art the
same.

CXXII.

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my doom,
And yearn'd to burst the folded
gloom,
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
The strong imagination roll

A sphere of stars about my soul,
In all her motion one with law ;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
Divide us not, be with me now,
And enter in at breast and brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death ;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
And every dew-drop paints a bow,
The wizard lightnings deeply
glow,
And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXIII.

There rolls the deep where grew the
tree.
O earth, what changes hast thou
seen !
There where the long street roars,
hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing
stands ;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves
and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,
And dream my dream, and hold
it true ;
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXIV.

That which we dare invoke to bless ;
Our dearest faith ; our ghastliest
doubt ;
He, They, One, All ; within, with-
out ;
The Power in darkness whom we
guess ;

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;
Nor thro' the questions men may
try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun :

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice "believe no more"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would
melt
The freezing reason's colder part,

And like a man in wrath the
heart
Stood up and answer'd " I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear :
But that blind clamor made me
wise ;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands ;
And out of darkness came the
hands
That reach thro' nature, moulding
men.

CXXV.

Whatever I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would
give,
Yea, tho' there often seem'd to
live
A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;
She did but look through dimmer
eyes ;
Or Love but play'd with gracious
lies,
Because he felt so fix'd in truth :

And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song ;
And if the words were sweet and
strong
He set his royal signet there ;

Abiding with me till I sail
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
And this electric force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

CXXVI.

Love is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and
sleep
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to
place,
And whispers to the worlds of
space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII.

And all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;

Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags :
They tremble, the sustaining
crag ;

The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the
sky,

And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;
While thou, dear spirit, happy
star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpalsied when he met with
Death,
Is comrade of the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
Of onward time shall yet be made,
And throned races may degrade ;
Yet O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and
Fear,
If all your office had to do
With old results that look like
new ;

If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
To fool the crowd with glorious
lies,
To cleave a creed in sects and
cries,

To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,
To cramp the student at his desk,
To make old bareness picturesque
And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;

Why then my scorn might well descend
On you and yours. I see in part
That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil coöperant to an end.

CXXIX.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal ;

O loved the most, when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown ; human, divine ;
Sweet human hand and lips and
eye ;

Dear heavenly friend that canst
not die,

Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
Loved deeper, darklier under-
stood ;

Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXX.

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
But tho' I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature
thou,

I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXXI.

O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer
shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow thro' our deeds and make them
pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquer'd years
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be
proved

Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O true and tried, so well and long,
Demand not thou a marriage lay ;
In that it is thy marriage day
Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
Since first he told me that he
loved

A daughter of our house; nor
proved
Since that dark day a day like this;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
Some thrice three years: they went
and came,
Remade the blood and changed
the fame,
And yet is love not less, but more;

No longer caring to embalm
In dying songs a dead regret,
But like a statue solid-set,
And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
Than in the summers that are
flown,
For I myself with these have
grown
To something greater than before;

Which makes appear the songs I
made
As echoes out of weaker times,
As half but idle brawling rhymes,
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
That must be made a wife ere
noon?
She enters, glowing like the moon
Of Eden on its bridal bower:

On me she bends her blissful eyes
And then on thee; they meet thy
look
And brighten like the star that
shook
Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she
grows
For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy; full of power;
As gentle; liberal-minded, great,
Consistent; wearing all that
weight
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out: the noon is near,
And I must give away the bride;
She fears not, or with thee
beside
And me behind her, will not fear.

For I that danced her on my knee,
That watch'd her on her nurse's
arm,
That shielded all her life from
harm
At last must part with her to thee;

Now waiting to be made a wife,
Her feet, my darling, on the dead;
Their pensive tablets round her
head,
And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
The "wilt thou" answer'd, and
again
The "wilt thou" ask'd, till out of
twain
Her sweet "I will" has made you one.

Now sign your names, which shall be
read,
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
By village eyes as yet unborn;
The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering
breeze;
The blind wall rocks, and on the
trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
Await them. Many a merry face
Salutes them — maidens of the
place,
That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
With him to whom her hand I
gave.
They leave the porch, they pass
the grave
That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
For them the light of life in-
creased,
Who stay to share the morning
feast,
Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
To meet and greet a whiter sun;
My drooping memory will not
shun
The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
And hearts are warm'd and faces
bloom,
As drinking health to bride and
groom
We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
Conjecture of a stiller guest,
Perchance, perchance, among the
rest,
And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
And those white-favor'd horses
wait;

They rise, but linger; it is late;
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
From little cloudlets on the grass,
But sweeps away as out we pass
To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
And talk of others that are wed,
And how she look'd, and what he
said,

And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
The shade of passing thought,
the wealth

Of words and wit, the double
health,
The crowning cup, the three-times-
three,

And last the dance;—till I retire:
Dumb is that tower which spake
so loud,

And high in heaven the stream-
ing cloud,
And on the downs a rising fire:

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,
Till over down and over dale
All night the shining vapor sail
And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing
rills,
And catch at every mountain
head,

And o'er the friths that branch
and spread
Their sleeping silver thro' the hills;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
With tender gloom the roof, the
wall;

And breaking let the splendor fall
To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
And, star and system rolling past,
A soul shall draw from out the
vast

And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
Result in man, be born and think,
And act and love, a closer link
Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
On knowledge; under whose com-
mand

Is Earth and Earth's, and in their
hand

Is Nature like an open book;

No longer half-akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and
did,

And hoped, and suffer'd, is but
seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

QUEEN MARY:

A DRAMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.

PHILIP, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

REGINALD POLE, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*

SIMON RENARD, *Spanish Ambassador.*

LE SIEUR DE NOAILLES, *French Ambassador.*

THOMAS CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

SIR NICHOLAS HEATH, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*

EDWARD COURTENAY, *Earl of Devon.*

LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, *afterwards Lord Howard, and Lord High Admiral.*

LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME.

LORD PAGET.

LORD PETRE.

STEPHEN GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*

EDMUND BONNER, *Bishop of London.*

THOMAS THIRLBY, *Bishop of Ely.*

SIR THOMAS WYATT

SIR THOMAS STAFFORD

Insurrectionary Leaders.

SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.

SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE, *Lord Mayor of London.*

THE DUKE OF ALVA

THE COUNT DE FERIA

attending on Philip.

PETER MARTYR.

FATHER COLE.

FATHER BOURNE.

VILLA GARCIA.

SOTO.

CAPTAIN BRETT

ANTHONY KNYVETT

Adherents of Wyatt.

PETERS, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*

ROGER, *Servant to Noailles.*

WILLIAM, *Servant to Wyatt.*

STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD *to the Princess Elizabeth.*

OLD NOKES and NOKES.

MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, *Mother of Courtenay.*

LADY CLARENCE

LADY MAGDALEN DACRES

Ladies in Waitir to the Queen.

ALICE.

MAID OF HONOR *to the Princess Elizabeth.*

JOAN

TIB

two Country Wives.

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, Two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, Gospellers, Marshalmen, etc.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — ALDGATE RICHLY
DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN.

Marshalman. Stand back, keep a clear lane! When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break

them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth! Shout, knaves!

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary!

First Citizen. That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

Second Citizen. It means a bastard.

Third Citizen. Nay, it means true-born.

First Citizen. Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?

Second Citizen. No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

Third Citizen. That was after, man; that was after.

First Citizen. Then which is the bastard?

Second Citizen. Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

Third Citizen. Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christ-masses.

Old Nokes (dreamily). Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

Third Citizen. No, old Nokes.

Old Nokes. It's Harry!

Third Citizen. It's Queen Mary.

Old Nokes. The blessed Mary's a-passing! [*Falls on his knees.*]

Nokes. Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

Third Citizen. Answer thou for him, then! thou'rt no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

Nokes. Eh! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

Third Citizen. But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at the elbow, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

Nokes. I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

Marshalman. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

First Citizen. He swears by the Rood. Whew!

Second Citizen. Hark! the trumpets.

[*The Procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.*]

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

[*Exeunt.*]

Manent TWO GENTLEMEN.

First Gentleman. By God's light a noble creature, right royal!

Second Gentleman. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my

mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

First Gentleman. I mean the Lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

Second Gentleman. Ay, that was in her hour of joy; there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again: this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

First Gentleman. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

Second Gentleman. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

First Gentleman. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

Second Gentleman. I suppose you touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

First Gentleman. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will go mad upon it.

Second Gentleman. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

First Gentleman. Ay, but he's too old.

Second Gentleman. And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal; but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

First Gentleman. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: will you not follow the procession?

Second Gentleman. No; I have seen enough for this day.

First Gentleman. Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether her

Grace incline to this splendid scion of
Plantagenet. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

Cranmer. To Strasburg, Antwerp,
Frankfort, Zurich, Worms,
Geneva, Basle — our Bishops from
their sees
Or fled, they say, or flying — Poinet,
Barlow,
Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the
Deans
Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and
Wells —
Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds
more;
So they report: I shall be left alone.
No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not
fly.

Enter PETER MARTYR.

Peter Martyr. Fly, Cranmer! were
there nothing else, your name
Stands first of those who sign'd the
Letters Patent
That gave her royal crown to Lady
Jane.

Cranmer. Stand first it may, but it
was written last:
Those that are now her Privy Council,
sign'd
Before me: nay, the Judges had pro-
nounced
That our young Edward might be-
queath the crown
Of England, putting by his father's
will.
Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for
me.
The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading
eyes
Fixt hard on mine, his frail transpar-
ent hand,
Damp with the sweat of death, and
gripping mine,
Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to
yield
His Church of England to the Papal
wolf
And Mary; then I could no more —
I sign'd.
Nay, for bare shame of inconsis-
tency,
She cannot pass her traitor council by,
To make me headless.

Peter Martyr. That might be for-
given.

I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not
own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist,
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice:
Your creed will be your death.

Cranmer. Step after step,

Thro' many voices crying right and
left,

Have I climb'd back into the primal
church,

And stand within the porch, and
Christ with me:

My flight were such a scandal to the
faith,

The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post.

Peter Martyr. But you divorced
Queen Catharine and her father;
hence, her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.

Cranmer. I cannot help it.
The Canonists and Schoolmen were
with me.

"Thou shalt not wed thy brother's
wife." — 'Tis written,

"They shall be childless." True,
Mary was born,

But France would not accept her for
a bride

As being born from incest; and this
wrought

Upon the king; and child by child,
you know,

Were momentary sparkles out as
quick

Almost as kindled; and he brought
his doubts

And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear
for him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.
But therefore am I trenching on the
time

That should already have seen your
steps a mile

From me and Lambeth? God be
with you! Go.

Peter Martyr. Ah, but how fierce a
letter you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd
you

For setting up a mass at Canterbury
To please the Queen.

Cranmer. It was a wheedling monk
Set up the mass.

Peter Martyr. I know it, my good
Lord.

But you so bubbled over with hot terms
Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Anti-
christ,

She never will forgive you. Fly, my
Lord, fly!

Cranmer. I wrote it, and God grant
me power to burn!

Peter Martyr. They have given me
a safe conduct: for all that

I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see
you,

Dear friend, for the last time; fare-
well, and fly.

Cranmer. Fly and farewell, and let
me die the death.

[Exit Peter Martyr.

Enter OLD SERVANT.

O, kind and gentle master, the Queen's Officers

Are here in force to take you to the Tower.

Cranmer. Ay, gentle friend, admit them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. — ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* A crowd. MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, COURTENAY. The SIEUR DE NOAILLES and his man ROGER *in front of the stage.* *Hubbub.*

Noailles. Hast thou let fall those papers in the palace?

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. "There will be no peace for Mary till Elizabeth lose her head."

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. And the other, "Long live Elizabeth the Queen!"

Roger. Ay, sir; she needs must tread upon them.

Noailles. Well.

These beastly swine make such a grunting here,
I cannot catch what Father Bourne is saying.

Roger. Quiet a moment, my masters; hear what the shaveling has to say for himself.

Crowd. Hush — hear!

Bourne. — and so this unhappy land, long divided in itself, and sever'd from the faith, will return into the one true fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin Queen hath —

Crowd. No pope! no pope!

Roger (to those about him, *mimicking Bourne*). — hath sent for the holy legate of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy absolution which —

First Citizen. Old Bourne to the life!

Second Citizen. Holy absolution! holy Inquisition!

Third Citizen. Down with the Papist!

[Hubbub.]

Bourne. — and now that your good bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long under bonds for the faith — *[Hubbub.]*

Noailles. Friend Roger, steal thou in among the crowd,

And get the swine to shout Elizabeth. Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-winter,

Begin with him.

Roger (goes). By the mass, old

friend, we'll have no pope here while the Lady Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith, fellow, that swearest by the mass?

Roger. Ay, that am I, new converted, but the old leaven sticks to my tongue yet.

First Citizen. He says right; by the mass we'll have no mass here.

Voices of the crowd. Peace! hear him; let his own words damn the Papist. From thine own mouth I judge thee — tear him down!

Bourne. — and since our Gracious Queen, let me call her our second Virgin Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true temple —

First Citizen. Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here — we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.]

Marchioness of Exeter. Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father

Murdered before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm:

Courtenay (in the pulpit). Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born,

And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

Crowd. A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.]

Noailles. These birds of passage come before their time:

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

Roger. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you

Than this old gaping gurgyle: look you there —

The prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen!

After him, boys! and pelt him from the city.

[They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.]

Noailles (to Roger). Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head —

That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon, Arise against her and dethrone the

Queen —

That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway —

That makes for France.

Good-day, my Lord of Devon;

A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

Courtenay. My mother said, Go up; and up I went.

I knew they would not do me any wrong,

For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

Noailles. You look'd a king.

Courtenay. Why not? I am king's blood.

Noailles. And in the whirl of change may come to be one.

Courtenay. Ah!

Noailles. But does your gracious Queen entreat you kinglike?

Courtenay. 'Fore God, I think she entreats me like a child.

Noailles. You've but a dull life in this maiden court,

I fear, my Lord?

Courtenay. A life of nods and yawns.

Noailles. So you would honor my poor house to-night,

We might enliven you. Divers honest fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more — we play.

Courtenay. At what?

Noailles. The Game of Chess.

Courtenay. The Game of Chess!

I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

Noailles. Ay, but we play with Henry, King of France,

And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the Channel,

We answer him with ours, and there are messengers

That go between us.

Courtenay. Why, such a game, sir, were whole years a playing.

Noailles. Nay; not so long I trust. That all depends

Upon the skill and swiftness of the players.

Courtenay. The King is skilful at it?

Noailles. Very, my Lord.

Courtenay. And the stakes high?

Noailles. But not beyond your means.

Courtenay. Well, I'm the first of players. I shall win.

Noailles. With our advice and in our company,

And so you well attend to the king's moves,

I think you may.

Courtenay. When do you meet?

Noailles. To-night.

Courtenay (aside). I will be there; the fellow's at his tricks —

Deep — I shall fathom him. (*Aloud.*)

Good morning, Noailles.

[*Exit Courtenay.*]

Noailles. Good-day, my Lord.

Strange game of chess! a King That with her own pawns plays against a Queen,

Whose play is all to find herself a King.

Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Courtenay seems

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a Knight,

That, with an ass's, not a horse's head, Skips every way, from levity or from fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so that Gardiner

And Simon Renard spy not out our game

Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that anyone

Suspected thee to be my man?

Roger. Not one, sir.

Noailles. No! the disguise was perfect. Let's away. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. *Enter COURTENAY.*

Courtenay. So yet am I, Unless my friends and mirrors lie to me,

A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.

Pah!

The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn traitor?

They've almost talked me into it: yet the word

Affrights me somewhat: to be such a one

As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.

Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your age,

And by your looks you are not worth the having,

Yet by your crown you are.

[*Seeing Elizabeth.*]

The Princess there?

If I tried her and la — she's amorous.

Have we not heard of her in Edward's time,

Her freaks and frolics with the late Lord Admiral?

I do believe she'd yield. I should be still

A party in the state; and then, who knows —

Elizabeth. What are you musing on,
my Lord of Devon?

Courtenay. Has not the Queen —

Elizabeth. Done what, Sir?

Courtenay. — made you follow
The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Len-
nox? —

You,

The heir presumptive.

Elizabeth. Why do you ask? you
know it.

Courtenay. You needs must bear it
hardly.

Elizabeth. No, indeed!

I am utterly submissive to the
Queen.

Courtenay. Well, I was musing up-
on that; the Queen

Is both my foe and yours: we should
be friends.

Elizabeth. My Lord, the hatred of
another to us

Is no true bond of friendship.

Courtenay. Might it not
Be the rough preface of some closer
bond?

Elizabeth. My Lord, you late were
loosed from out the Tower,
Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,
You spent your life; that broken, out
you flutter

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now
would settle

Upon this flower, now that; but all
things here

At court are known; you have solicited
The Queen, and been rejected.

Courtenay. Flower, she!
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh
and sweet

As the first flower no bee has ever
tried.

Elizabeth. Are you the bee to try
me? why, but now

I called you butterfly.

Courtenay. You did me wrong,
I love not to be called a butterfly:

Why do you call me butterfly?

Elizabeth. Why do you go so gay
then?

Courtenay. Velvet and gold.
This dress was made me as the Earl
of Devon

To take my seat in; looks it not right
royal?

Elizabeth. So royal that the Queen
forbad you wearing it.

Courtenay. I wear it then to spite
her.

Elizabeth. My Lord, my Lord;
I see you in the Tower again. Her
Majesty

Hears you affect the Prince — prelates
kneel to you. —

Courtenay. I am the noblest blood
in Europe, Madam,

A Courtenay of Devon, and her
cousin.

Elizabeth. She hears you make
your boast that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my
good Lord.

Courtenay. How folly? a great
party in the state

Wills me to wed her.

Elizabeth. Failing her, my Lord,
Doth not as great a party in the
state

Will you to wed me?

Courtenay. Even so, fair lady.

Elizabeth. You know to flatter
ladies.

Courtenay. Nay, I meant
True matters of the heart.

Elizabeth. My heart, my Lord.

Is no great party in the state as yet.

Courtenay. Great, said you? nay,
you shall be great. I love you,
Lay my life in your hands. Can you
be close?

Elizabeth. Can you, my Lord?

Courtenay. Close as a miser's casket.
Listen:

The King of France, Noailles the
Ambassador,

The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter
Carew,

Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some
others,

Have sworn this Spanish marriage
shall not be.

If Mary will not hear us — well —
conjecture —

Were I in Devon with my wedded
bride,

The people there so worship me —
Your ear;

You shall be Queen.

Elizabeth. You speak too low,
my Lord;

I cannot hear you.

Courtenay. I'll repeat it.

Elizabeth. No!
Stand further off, or you may lose
your head.

Courtenay. I have a head to lose
for your sweet sake.

Elizabeth. Have you, my Lord?
Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.

Not many friends are mine, except
indeed

Among the many. I believe you
mine;

And so you may continue mine, fare-
well,

And that at once.

Enter MARY, behind.

Mary. Whispering — leagued to-
gether

To bar me from my Philip.

Courtenay. Pray — consider —

Elizabeth (*seeing the Queen*). Well, that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.

I trust that he will carry you well to-day,

And heal your headache.

Courtenay. You are wild; what headache?

Heartache, perchance; not headache.

Elizabeth (*aside to Courtenay*). Are you blind?

[*Courtenay sees the Queen and exit.*
Exit Mary.

Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Was that my Lord of Devon? do not you

Be seen in corners with my Lord of Devon.

He hath fallen out of favor with the Queen.

She fears the Lords may side with you and him

Against her marriage; therefore is he dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather come

To woo you, niece, he is dangerous every way.

Elizabeth. Not very dangerous that way, my good uncle.

Howard. But your own state is full of danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers, Look to you as the one to crown their ends.

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray you;

Nay, if by chance you hear of any such, Speak not thereof — no, not to your best friend,

Lest you should be confounded with it. Still —

Perinde ac cadaver — as the priest says,

You know your Latin — quiet as a dead body.

What was my Lord of Devon telling you?

Elizabeth. Whether he told me anything or not,

I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

Howard. You do right well.

I do not care to know; but this I charge you,

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord Chancellor

(*I count it as a kind of virtue in him, He hath not many*), as a mastiff dog May love a puppy cur for no more reason

Than that the twain have been tied up together,

Thus Gardiner — for the two were fellow-prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower —

Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to it, niece,

He hath no fence when Gardiner questions him;

All oozes out; yet him — because they know him

The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet

(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the people

Claim as their natural leader — ay, some say,

That you shall marry him, make him King belike.

Elizabeth. Do they say so, good uncle?

Howard. Ay, good niece!

You should be plain and open with me, niece.

You should not play upon me.

Elizabeth. No, good uncle.

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner. The Queen would see your Grace upon the moment.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I think she means to counsel your withdrawing

To Ashridge, or some other country house.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I do but bring the message, know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from herself.

Elizabeth. 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd before the word

Was spoken, for in truth I had meant to crave

Permission of her Highness to retire To Ashridge, and pursue my studies there.

Gardiner. Madam, to have the wish before the word

Is man's good Fairy — and the Queen is yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand, Whereof 'tis like enough she means to make

A farewell present to your Grace.

Elizabeth. My Lord,

I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

Gardiner. I doubt it not, Madam, most loyal. [*Bows low and exit.*

Howard. See,

This comes of parleying with my Lord of Devon.

Well, well, you must obey; and I myself

Believe it will be better for your welfare.

Your time will come.

Elizabeth. I think my time will come.

Uncle,
I am of sovereign nature, that I know,
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt
within me

Stirrings of some great doom when
God's just hour

Peals — but this fierce old Gardiner
— his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd
eyes

Half fright me.

Howard. You've a bold heart; keep
it so.

He cannot touch you save that you
turn traitor;

And so take heed I pray you — you
are one

Who love that men should smile up-
on you, niece.

They'd smile you into treason — some
of them.

Elizabeth. I spy the rock beneath
the smiling sea.

But if this Philip, the proud Catholic
prince,

And this bald priest, and she that
hates me, seek

In that lone house, to practise on my
life,

By poison, fire, shot, stab —

Howard. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at
sea —

Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip
and all

Your trouble to the dogstar and the
devil.

Elizabeth. To the Pleiads, uncle;
they have lost a sister.

Howard. But why say that? what
have you done to lose her?

Come, come, I will go with you to the
Queen. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY with PHILIP'S miniature. ALICE.

Mary (*kissing the miniature*). Most
goodly, Kinglike and an Em-
peror's son, —

A king to be, — is he not noble, girl?

Alice. Goodly enough, your Grace,
and yet, methinks,

I have seen goodlier.

Mary. Ay; some waxen doll

Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike;
All red and white, the fashion of our
land.

But my good mother came (*God rest
her soul*)

Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,
And in my likings.

Alice. By your Grace's leave
Your royal mother came of Spain,
but took

To the English red and white. Your
royal father

(*For so they say*) was all pure lily and
rose

In his youth, and like a lady.

Mary. O, just God!
Sweet mother, you had time and cause
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.

Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,
forlorn!

And then the King — that traitor past
forgiveness,

The false archbishop fawning on him,
married

The mother of Elizabeth — a heretic
Ev'n as *she* is; but God hath sent me
here

To take such order with all heretics
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'
My father and my brother had not
lived.

What wast thou saying of this Lady
Jane

Now in the Tower?

Alice. Why, Madam, she was pass-
ing

Some chapel down in Essex, and with
her

Lady Anne Wharton, and, the Lady
Anne

Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane
stood up

Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady

Anne,

To him within there who made Heav-
en and Earth?

I cannot, and I dare not, tell your
Grace

What Lady Jane replied.

Mary. But I will have it.

Alice. She said — pray pardon me,
and pity her —

She hath hearken'd evil counsel — ah!
she said,

The baker made him.

Mary. Monstrous! blasphemous!
She ought to burn. Hence, thou (*Exit*

Alice). No — being traitor
Her head will fall: shall it? she is
but a child.

We do not kill the child for doing
that

His father whipt him into doing — a
head

So full of grace and beauty! would
that mine
Were half as gracious! O, my lord
to be,
My love, for thy sake only.
I am eleven years older than he is.
But will he care for that?
No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,
But love me only: then the bastard
sprout,
My sister, is far fairer than myself.
Will he be drawn to her?
No, being of the true faith with myself.
Paget is for him—for to wed with
Spain
Would treble England—Gardiner is
against him;
The Council, people, Parliament
against him;
But I will have him! My hard fa-
ther hated me;
My brother rather hated me than
loved;
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy
Virgin,
Plead with thy blessed Son; grant
me my prayer:
Give me my Philip; and we two will
lead
The living waters of the Faith again
Back thro' their widow'd channel
here, and watch
The parch'd banks rolling incense, as
of old,
To heaven, and kindled with the
palms of Christ!

Enter USHER.

Who waits, sir?

Usher. Madam, the Lord Chan-
cellor.

Mary. Bid him come in. (*Enter*
GARDINER.) Good morning,
my good Lord. [*Exit Usher.*

Gardiner. That every morning of
your Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's
prayer

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen
Gardiner.

Mary. Come you to tell me this,
my Lord?

Gardiner. And more.

Your people have begun to learn your
worth.

Your pious wish to pay King Ed-
ward's debts,

Your lavish household curb'd, and the
remission

Of half that subsidy levied on the
people,

Make all tongues praise and all hearts
beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved: the
realm is poor,

The exchequer at neap-tide: we might
withdraw

Part of our garrison at Calais.

Mary. Calais!

Our one point on the main, the gate
of France!

I am Queen of England; take mine
eyes, mine heart,

But do not lose me Calais.

Gardiner. Do not fear it.

Of that hereafter. I say your Grace
is loved.

That I may keep you thus, who am
your friend

And ever faithful counsellor, might I
speak?

Mary. I can forespeak your speak-
ing. Would I marry

Prince Philip, if all England hate
him? That is

Your question, and I front it with an-
other:

Is it England, or a party? Now, your
answer.

Gardiner. My answer is, I wear be-
neath my dress

A shirt of mail: my house hath been
assaulted,

And when I walk abroad, the popu-
lace,

With fingers pointed like so many
daggers,

Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and
Philip;

And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-
arms

Guard my poor dreams for England.

Men would murder me,

Because they think me favor of this
marriage.

Mary. And that were hard upon
you, my Lord Chancellor.

Gardiner. But our young Earl of
Devon—

Mary. Earl of Devon?

I freed him from the Tower, placed
him at Court;

I made him Earl of Devon, and—the
fool—

He wrecks his health and wealth on
courtesans,

And rolls himself in carrion like a
dog.

Gardiner. More like a school-boy
that hath broken bounds,

Sickening himself with sweets.

Mary. I will not hear of him.

Good, then, they will revolt: but I am
Tudor,

And shall control them.

Gardiner. I will help you, Madam,
Even to the utmost. All the church
is grateful.

You have ousted the mock priest, re-
pulpited

The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the
rood again,
And brought us back the mass. I am
all thanks
To God and to your Grace: yet I
know well,
Your people, and I go with them so
far,
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard
here to play
The tyrant, or in commonwealth or
church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this
the face of one who plays the
tyrant?

Peruse it; is it not goodly, ay, and
gentle?

Gardiner. Madam, methinks a cold
face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of
Courtenay—

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would
his life

Were half as goodly (*aside*).

Mary. What is that you mutter?

Gardiner. Oh, Madam, take it
bluntly; marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of
sons!

The prince is known in Spain, in
Flanders, ha!

For Philip—

Mary. You offend us; you may
leave us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

Gardiner. If your Majesty—

Mary. I have sworn upon the body
and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.

Gardiner. Hath your Grace so
sworn?

Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gardiner. News to me!

It then remains for your poor Gardi-
ner,

So you still care to trust him some-
what less

Than Simon Renard, to compose the
event

In some such form as least may harm
your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sounded
to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

Gardiner. All my hope is now
It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gardiner (aside). These princes are
like children, must be phys-
ick'd,

The bitter in the sweet. I have lost
mine office,

It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a
fool. [*Exit.*]

Enter USHER.

Mary. Who waits?

Usher. The Ambassador from
France, your Grace.

Mary (sits down). Bid him come in.
Good morning, Sir de Noailles.

[*Exit Usher.*]

Noailles (entering). A happy morn-
ing to your Majesty.

Mary. And I should some time have
a happy morning;

I have had none yet. What says the
King your Master?

Noailles. Madam, my master hears
with much alarm,

That you may marry Philip, Prince of
Spain—

Foreseeing, with whate'er unwilling-
ness,

That if this Philip be the titular king
Of England, and at war with him,

your Grace
And kingdom will be suck'd into the
war,

Ay, tho' you long for peace; where-
fore, my master,

If but to prove your Majesty's good-
will,

Would fain have some fresh treaty
drawn between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty?
wherefore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still main-
tain

All former treaties with his Majesty.
Our royal word for that! and your

good master,

Pray God he do not be the first to
break them,

Must be content with that; and so,
farewell.

Noailles (going, returns). I would
your answer had been other,

Madam,

For I foresee dark days.

Mary. And so do I, sir;

Your master works against me in the
dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland
Against me.

Noailles. Nay, pure phantasy, your
Grace.

Why should he move against you?

Mary. Will you hear why?

Mary of Scotland,—for I have not
own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after
me

Is heir of England; and my royal
father,

To make the crown of Scotland one
with ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Ed-
ward's bride;

Ay, but your king stole her a babe
from Scotland
In order to betroth her to your Dau-
phin.

See then :

Mary of Scotland, married to your
Dauphin,

Would make our England, France ;
Mary of England, joining hands with
Spain,

Would be too strong for France.

Yea, were there issue born to her,
Spain and we,

One crown, might rule the world.
There lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide
and seek.

Show me your faces !

Noailles. Madam, I am amazed :
French, I must needs wish all good
things for France.

That must be pardon'd me ; but I pro-
test

Your Grace's policy hath a farther
flight

Than mine into the future. We but
seek

Some settled ground for peace to stand
upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this,
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever ?

Noailles. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip ?

Noailles. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of
Emperor ?

Noailles. No, surely.

Mary. I can make allowance for
thee,

Thou speakest of the enemy of thy
king.

Noailles. Make no allowance for the
naked truth.

He is every way a lesser man than
Charles ;

Stone-hard, ice-cold — no dash of dar-
ing in him.

Mary. If cold, his life is pure.

Noailles. Why (*smiling*), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou ?

Noailles. A very wanton life indeed
(*smiling*).

Mary. Your audience is concluded,
sir. [*Exit Noailles.*]

You cannot
Learn a man's nature from his natural
foe.

Enter USHER.

Who waits ?

Usher. The Ambassador of Spain,
your Grace. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIMON RENARD.

Mary (*rising to meet him*). Thou art

ever welcome, Simon Renard.

Hast thou

Brought me the letter which thine
Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand
Of Philip ?

Renard. Nay, your Grace, it hath
not reach'd me.

I know not wherefore — some mis-
chance of flood,

And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse,
or wave

And wind at their old battle : he must
have written.

Mary. But Philip never writes me
one poor word,

Which in his absence had been all my
wealth.

Strange in a wooer !

Renard. Yet I know the Prince,
So your king-parliament suffer him to

land,
Yearns to set foot upon your island

shore.

Mary. God change the pebble
which his kingly foot

First presses into some more costly
stone

Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one
mark it

And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd
firelike ;

I'll set it round with gold, with pearl,
with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church
come with him ;

Stand on the deck and spread his
wings for sail !

God lay the waves and strow the
storms at sea,

And here at land among the people !
O Renard,

I am much beset, I am almost in de-
spair.

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is
ours ;

But for our heretic Parliament —
Renard. O Madam,

You fly your thoughts like kites. My
master, Charles,

Bade you go softly with your heretics
here,

Until your throne had ceased to trem-
ble. Then

Spit them like larks for aught I care.
Besides,

When Henry broke the carcase of
your church

To pieces, there were many wolves
among you

Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into
their den.

The Pope would have you make them
render these ;

So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole ;
ill counsel !

These let them keep at present; stir
not yet

This matter of the Church lands. At
his coming

Your star will rise.

Mary. My star! a baleful one.
I see but the black night, and hear
the wolf.

What star?

Renard. Your star will be your
princely son,
Heir of this England and the Nether-
lands!

And if your wolf the while should
howl for more,

We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish
gold.

I do believe, I have dusted some al-
ready,

That, soon or late, your Parliament is
ours.

Mary. Why do they talk so foully
of your Prince,

Renard?

Renard. The lot of Princes. To sit
high

Is to be lied about.

Mary. They call him cold,
Haughty, ay, worse.

Renard. Why, doubtless, Philip
shows

Some of the bearing of your blue
blood—still

All within measure—nay, it well
becomes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of
his father?

Renard. Nay, some believe that he
will go beyond him.

Mary. Is this like him?

Renard. Ay, somewhat; but your
Philip

Is the most princelike Prince beneath
the sun.

This is a daub to Philip.

Mary. Of a pure life?

Renard. As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven,

The text—Your Highness knows it,
“Whosoever

Looketh after a woman,” would not
graze

The Prince of Spain. You are happy
in him there,

Chaste as your Grace!

Mary. I am happy in him there.

Renard. And would be altogether
happy, Madam,

So that your sister were but look'd to
closer.

You have sent her from the court, but
then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales,
But hatch you some new treason in
the woods.

Mary. We have our spies abroad
to catch her tripping,

And then if caught, to the Tower.

Renard. The Tower! the block!
The word has turn'd your Highness
pale; the thing

Was no such scarecrow in your father's
time.

I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd
with the jest

When the head leapt—so common!
I do think

To save your crown that it must come
to this.

Mary. No, *Renard*; it must never
come to this.

Renard. Not yet; but your old
Traitors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland
to death,

The sentence having past upon them
all,

Spared you the Duke of Suffolk,
Guildford Dudley,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to
wear your crown?

Mary. Dared? nay, not so; the
child obey'd her father.

Spite of her tears her father forced it
on her.

Renard. Good Madam, when the
Roman wish'd to reign,

He slew not him alone who wore the
purple,

But his assessor in the throne, per-
chance

A child more innocent than Lady Jane.

Mary. I am English Queen, not
Roman Emperor.

Renard. Yet too much mercy is a
want of mercy,

And wastes more life. Stamp out the
fire, or this

Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn
the throne

Where you should sit with Philip: he
will not come

Till she be gone.

Mary. Indeed, if that were true—
For Philip comes, one hand in mine,

and one

Steadying the tremulous pillars of the
Church—

But no, no, no. Farewell. I am
somewhat faint

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I
am not Queen

Of mine own heart, which every now
and then

Beats me half dead: yet stay, this
golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it me,
And I have broken with my father—

take

And wear it as a memorial of a morn-
ing

Which found me full of foolish doubts,
and leaves me

As hopeful.

Renard (aside). Whew — the folly of
all follies

Is to be love-sick for a shadow.
(*Aloud*) Madam,

This chains me to your service, not
with gold,

But dearest links of love. Farewell,
and trust me,

Philip is yours. [*Exit.*]

Mary. Mine — but not yet all mine.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Your Council is in Session,
please your Majesty.

Mary. Sir, let them sit. I must
have time to breathe.

No, say I come. (*Exit Usher.*) I
won by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to
Flanders.

I would not; but a hundred miles I
rode,

Sent out my letters, call'd my friends
together,

Struck home and won.

And when the Council would not
crown me — thought

To bind me first by oaths I could not
keep,

And keep with Christ and conscience
— was it boldness

Or weakness that won there? when I,
their Queen,

Cast myself down upon my knees
before them,

And those hard men brake into woman
tears,

Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that
passion

Gave me my Crown.

Enter ALICE.

Girl; hast thou ever heard
Slanders against Prince Philip in our
Court?

Alice. What slanders? I, your
Grace; no, never.

Mary. Nothing?

Alice. Never, your Grace.

Mary. See that you neither hear
them nor repeat!

Alice (aside). Good Lord! but I
have heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often —
mum!

Why comes that old fox-Fleming back
again?

Enter RENARD.

Renard. Madam, I scarce had left
your Grace's presence
Before I chanced upon the messenger

Who brings that letter which we
waited for —

The formal offer of Prince Philip's
hand.

It craves an instant answer, Ay or
No.

Mary. An instant Ay or No! the
Council sits.

Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your
Highness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[*Exit into the Council Chamber.*]

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master
Renard,

If you have falsely painted your fine
Prince;

Praised, where you should have
blamed him, I pray God

No woman ever love you, Master
Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan
at night

As tho' the nightmare never left her
bed.

Renard. My pretty maiden, tell me,
did you ever

Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Renard. Not prettily put? I mean,
my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty
maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty
man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what
then?

Renard. Then, pretty maiden, you
should know that whether

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to
fan

A kindled fire.

Alice. According to the song.

His friends would praise him, I believed 'em,
His foes would blame him, and I scorn'd

'em,
His friends — as Angels I received 'em,
His foes — the Devil had suborn'd 'em.

Renard. Peace, pretty maiden.

I hear them stirring in the Council
Chamber.

Lord Paget's "Ay" is sure — who
else? and yet,

They are all too much at odds to close
at once

In one full-throated No! Her High-
ness comes.

Enter MARY.

Alice. How deathly pale! — a chair,
your Highness.

[*Bringing one to the Queen.*]

Renard. Madam,
The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.
[*Sinks into chair, half fainting.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. — ALLINGTON CASTLE.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear
from Carew or the Duke
Of Suffolk, and till then I should not
move.
The Duke hath gone to Leicester;
Carew stirs
In Devon: that fine porcelain Courte-
nay,
Save that he fears he might be crack'd
in using,
(I have known a semi-madman in my
time
So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon
too.

Enter WILLIAM.

News abroad, William?

William. None so new, Sir Thomas,
and none so old, Sir Thomas. No
new news that Philip comes to wed
Mary, no old news that all men hate
it. Old Sir Thomas would have hated
it. The bells are ringing at Maidstone.
Doesn't your worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come
to reign again.

Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's
no call

As yet forme; so in this pause, before
The mine be fired, it were a pious
work

To string my father's sonnets, left
about

Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair
order,

And head them with a lamer rhyme
of mine,

To grace his memory.

William. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas?
He was a fine courtier, he; Queen
Anne loved him. All the women
loved him. I loved him, I was in
Spain with him. I couldn't eat in
Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I
hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou could'st drink in
Spain if I remember.

William. Sir Thomas, we may grant
the wine. Old Sir Thomas always
granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my
father's sonnets.

William. Ay — sonnets — a fine
courtier of the old Court, old Sir
Thomas. [*Exit.*]

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he
loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and
letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song. The sire
begets

Not half his likeness in the son. I
fail

Where he was fullest: yet — to write
it down. [*He writes.*]

Re-enter WILLIAM.

William. There is news, there is
news, and no call for sonnet-sorting
now, nor for sonnet-making either, but
ten thousand men on Penenden Heath
all calling after your worship, and
your worship's name heard into Maid-
stone market, and your worship the
first man in Kent and Christendom,
for the Queen's down, and the world's
up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop — mountain
out of mouse.

Say for ten thousand ten — and pot-
house knaves,
Brain-dizzied with a draught of morn-
ing ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

William. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Knyvett. Look you, Master Wyatt,
Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will
speak

When I and thou and all rebellions
lie

Dead bodies without voice. Song
flies you know

For ages.

Knyvett. Tut, your sonnet's a flying
ant,

Wing'd for a moment.

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work,

[*Tearing the paper.*]
It lies there in six pieces at your feet;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Knyvett. If you can carry your head
upon your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it
off my shoulders,
And sonnet-making's safer.

Knyvett. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you
will.

Ay, but not now; what, have you
eyes, ears, brains?

This Philip and the black-faced
swarms of Spain,

The hardest, cruellest people in the
world,

Come locusting upon us, eat us up,
Confiscate lands, goods, money —

Wyatt, Wyatt,

Wake, or the stout old island will
become

A rotten limb of Spain. They roar
for you

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of
them—more—

All arm'd, waiting a leader; there's
no glory

Like his who saves his country: and
you sit

Sing-singing here; but, if I'm any
judge,

By God, you are as poor a poet,
Wyatt,

As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic
As an honest friend: you stroke me

on one cheek,
Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,

Antony!

You know I know all this. I must
not move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.
I fear the mine is fired before the

time.

Knyvett (*showing a paper*). But
here's some Hebrew. Faith, I

half forgot it.

Look; can you make it English? A
strange youth

Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,
"Wyatt,"

And whisking round a corner, show'd
his back

Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha! Courtenay's cipher.

[*Reads.*

"Sir Peter Carew fled to France: it
is thought the Duke will be taken.

I am with you still; but, for appearance
sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner

knows, but the Council are all at
odds, and the Queen hath no force for

resistance. Move, if you move, at
once."

Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke
taken?

Down scabbard, and out sword! and
let Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.
No; not that;

But we will teach Queen Mary how to
reign.

Who are those that shout below there?

Knyvett. Why, some fifty
That follow'd me from Penenden

Heath in hope
To hear you speak.

Wyatt. Open the window, Knyvett;
The mine is fired, and I will speak to

them.

Men of Kent; England of England;
you that have kept your old customs

upright, while all the rest of England

bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause
that hath brought us together is not
the cause of a county or a shire, but
of this England, in whose crown our
Kent is the fairest jewel. Philip shall
not wed Mary; and ye have called me
to be your leader. I know Spain. I
have been there with my father; I
have seen them in their own land;
have marked the haughtiness of their
nobles; the cruelty of their priests.
If this man marry our Queen, however
the Council and the Commons may
fence round his power with restriction,
he will be King, King of England, my
masters; and the Queen, and the laws,
and the people, his slaves. What?
shall we have Spain on the throne and
in the parliament; Spain in the pulpit
and on the law-bench; Spain in all the
great offices of state; Spain in our
ships, in our forts, in our houses, in
our beds?

Crowd. No! no! no Spain!

William. No Spain in our beds—
that were worse than all. I have been

there with old Sir Thomas, and the
beds I know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must we
levy war against the Queen's Grace?

Wyatt. No, my friend; war for the
Queen's Grace—to save her from her-

self and Philip—war against Spain.
And think not we shall be alone—

thousands will flock to us. The
Council, the Court itself, is on our side.

The Lord Chancellor himself is on our
side. The King of France is with us;

the King of Denmark is with us; the
world is with us—war against Spain!

And if we move not now, yet it will be
known that we have moved; and if

Philip come to be King, O, my God!
the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew,

the stake, the fire. If we move not
now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles

with her gold, and creeps, creeps
snake-like about our legs till we can-

not move at all; and ye know, my
masters, that wherever Spain hath

ruled she hath wither'd all beneath
her. Look at the New World—a

paradise made hell; the red man, that
good helpless creature, starved,

maim'd, flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd,
buried alive, worried by dogs; and

here, nearer home, the Netherlands,
Sicily, Naples, Lombardy. I say no

more—only this, their lot is yours.
Forward to London with me! forward

to London! If ye love your liberties
or your skins, forward to London!

Crowd. Forward to London! A
Wyatt! a Wyatt!

Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to
take the guns

From out the vessels lying in the river.

Then on.

A Peasant. Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend, Is not half-waked; but every parish tower

Shall clang and clash alarum as we pass,

And pour along the land, and swoll'n and fed

With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London.

Crowd. A Wyatt! a Wyatt! Forward!

Knyvett. Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

Wyatt. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

Knyvett. Or Lady Jane?

Wyatt. No, poor soul; no.

Ah, gray old castle of Allington, green field

Beside the brimming Medway, it may chance

That I shall never look upon you more.

Knyvett. Come, now, you're sonnetting again.

Wyatt. Not I. I'll have my head set higher in the state;

Or — if the Lord God will it — on the stake. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. — GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (The Lord Mayor), LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, ALDERMEN and CITIZENS.

White. I trust the Queen comes hither with her guards.

Howard. Ay, all in arms.

[Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.]

Why do they hurry out there?

White. My Lord, cut out the rotten from your apple,

Your apple eats the better. Let them go.

They go like those old Pharisees in John

Convicted by their conscience, arrant cowards,

Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

Howard. In some few minutes. She will address your guilds and companies.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for her.

But help her in this exigency, make

Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man

This day in England.

White. I am Thomas White.

Few things have fail'd to which I set my will.

I do my most and best.

Howard. You know that after The Captain Brett, who went with

your train bands

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to him

With all his men, the Queen in that distress

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the traitor,

Feigning to treat with him about her marriage —

Know too what Wyatt said.

White. He'd sooner be,

While this same marriage question was being argued,

Trusted than trust — the scoundrel — and demanded

Possession of her person and the Tower.

Howard. And four of her poor Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

White. I know it. What do and say

Your Council at this hour?

Howard. I will trust you.

We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council,

The Parliament as well, are troubled waters;

And yet like waters of the fen they know not

Which way to flow. All hangs on her address,

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

White. How look'd the city When now you past it? Quiet?

Howard. Like our Council,

Your city is divided. As we past, Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There

were citizens

Stood each before his shut-up booth, and look'd

As grim and grave as from a funeral. And here a knot of ruffians all in

rags,

With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a young mother,

Her face on flame, her red hair all blown back,

She shrilling "Wyatt," while the boy she held

Mimick'd and piped her "Wyatt," as red as she

In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing her,

So close they stood, another, mute as death,
 And white as her own milk; her babe in arms
 Had felt the faltering of his mother's heart,
 And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious Catholic,
 Mumbling and mixing up in his scared prayers
 Heaven and earth's Maries; over his bow'd shoulder
 Scowl'd that world-hated and world-hating beast,
 A haggard Anabaptist. Many such groups.
 The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Courtenay,
 Nay the Queen's right to reign—'fore God, the rogues—
 Were freely buzzed among them. So I say
 Your city is divided, and I fear
 One scruple, this or that way, of success
 Would turn it thither. Wherefore now the Queen
 In this low pulse and palsy of the state,
 Bade me to tell you that she counts on you
 And on myself as her two hands; on you,
 In your own city, as her right, my Lord,
 For you are loyal.
White. Am I Thomas White?
 One word before she comes. Elizabeth—
 Her name is much abused among these traitors.
 Where is she? She is loved by all of us.
 I scarce have heart to mingle in this matter,
 If she should be mishandled.
Howard. No; she shall not.
 The Queen had written her word to come to court:
 Methought I smelt out Renard in the letter,
 And fearing for her, sent a secret missive,
 Which told her to be sick. Happily or not,
 It found her sick indeed.

White. God send her well;
 Here comes her Royal Grace.

Enter Guards, MARY, and GARDINER.
SIR THOMAS WHITE leads her to a raised seat on the dais.

White. I, the Lord Mayor, and these our companies
 And guilds of London, gathered here, beseech

Your Highness to accept our lowliest thanks
 For your most princely presence; and we pray
 That we, your true and loyal citizens,
 From your own royal lips, at once may know
 The wherefore of this coming, and so learn
 Your royal will, and do it.—I, Lord Mayor
 Of London, and our guilds and companies.

Mary. In mine own person am I come to you,
 To tell you what indeed ye see and know,
 How traitorously these rebels out of Kent
 Have made strong head against ourselves and you.
 They would not have me wed the Prince of Spain;
 That was their pretext—so they spake at first—
 But we sent divers of our Council to them,
 And by their answers to the question ask'd,
 It doth appear this marriage is the least
 Of all their quarrel.
 They have betrayed the treason of their hearts:
 Seek to possess our person, hold our Tower,
 Place and displace our councillors, and use
 Both us and them according as they will.
 Now what I am ye know right well—your Queen;
 To whom, when I was wedded to the realm
 And the realm's laws (the spousal ring whereof,
 Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
 Upon this finger), ye did promise full
 Allegiance and obedience to the death.
 Ye know my father was the rightful heir
 Of England, and his right came down to me,
 Corroborate by your acts of Parliament:
 And as ye were most loving unto him,
 So doubtless will ye show yourselves to me.
 Wherefore, ye will not brook that anyone
 Should seize our person, occupy our state,
 More specially a traitor so presumptuous

As this same Wyatt, who hath tamper'd with
 A public ignorance, and, under color
 Of such a cause as hath no color, seeks
 To bend the laws to his own will, and yield
 Full scope to persons rascal and forlorn,
 To make free spoil and havock of your goods.
 Now as your Prince, I say,
 I, that was never mother, cannot tell
 How mothers love their children; yet, methinks,
 A prince as naturally may love his people
 As these their children; and be sure your Queen
 So loves you, and so loving, needs must deem
 This love by you return'd as heartily;
 And thro' this common knot and bond of love,
 Doubt not they will be speedily overthrown.
 As to this marriage, ye shall understand
 We made thereto no treaty of ourselves,
 And set no foot theretoward unadvised
 Of all our Privy Council; furthermore,
 This marriage had the assent of those to whom
 The king, my father, did commit his trust;
 Who not alone esteem'd it honorable,
 But for the wealth and glory of our realm,
 And all our loving subjects, most expedient.
 As to myself,
 I am not so set on wedlock as to choose
 But where I list, nor yet so amorous
 That I must needs be husbanded; I thank God,
 I have lived a virgin, and I noway doubt
 But that with God's grace, I can live so still.
 Yet if it might please God that I should leave
 Some fruit of mine own body after me,
 To be your king, ye would rejoice thereat,
 And it would be your comfort, as I trust;
 And truly, if I either thought or knew
 This marriage should bring loss or danger to you,
 My subjects, or impair in any way
 This royal state of England, I would never
 Consent thereto, nor marry while I live:
 Moreover, if this marriage should not seem,
 Before our own High Court of Parliament,
 To be of rich advantage to our realm,

We will refrain, and not alone from this,
 Likewise from any other, out of which
 Looms the least chance of peril to our realm.
 Wherefore be bold, and with your lawful Prince
 Stand fast against our enemies and yours,
 And fear them not. I fear them not.
 My Lord,
 I leave Lord William Howard in your city,
 To guard and keep you whole and safe from all
 The spoil and sackage aim'd at by these rebels,
 Who mouth and foam against the Prince of Spain.
Voices. Long live Queen Mary!
 Down with Wyatt!

The Queen!
White. Three voices from our guilds and companies!
 You are shy and proud like Englishmen, my masters,
 And will not trust your voices. Understand:
 Your lawful Prince hath come to cast herself
 On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to fall
 Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,
 And finds you statues. Speak at once — and all!
 For whom?
 Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will;
 The Queen of England — or the Kentish Squire?
 I know you loyal. Speak! in the name of God!
 The Queen of England or the rabble of Kent?
 The reeking dungfork master of the mace!
 Your havings wasted by the scythe and spade —
 Your rights and charters hobnail'd into slush —
 Your houses fired — your gutters bubbling blood —

Acclamation. No! No! The Queen! the Queen!

White. Your Highness hears
 This burst and bass of loyal harmony,
 And how we each and all of us abhor
 The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt
 Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now make oath
 To raise your Highness thirty thousand men,
 And arm and strike as with one hand, and brush
 This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea

That might have leapt upon us un-
awares.

Swear with me, noble fellow-citizens,
all,

With all your trades, and guilds, and
companies.

Citizens. We swear!

Mary. We thank you Lordship and
your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*]

White. I trust this day, thro' God,
I have saved the crown.

First Alderman. Ay, so my Lord
of Pembroke in command

Of all her force be safe; but there are
doubts.

Second Alderman. I hear that Gar-
diner, coming with the Queen,
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his
saddle-bow,

As if to win the man by flattering him.
Is he so safe to fight upon her side?

First Alderman. If not, there's no
man safe.

White. Yes, Thomas White.
I am safe enough; no man need flat-
ter me.

Second Alderman. Nay, no man
need; but did you mark our
Queen?

The color freely play'd into her
face,

And the half sight which makes her
look so stern,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world
of hers,

To read our faces; I have never seen
her

So queenly or so goodly.

White. Courage, sir,
That makes or man or woman look
their goodliest.

Die like the torn fox dumb, but never
whine

Like that poor heart, Northumberland,
at the block.

Bagenhall. The man had children,
and he whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-
hearted, else

Should we so dote on courage, were
it commoner?

The Queen stands up, and speaks for
her own self;

And all men cry, She is queenly, she
is goodly.

Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord
Mayor here,

By his own rule, he hath been so bold
to-day,

Should look more goodly than the
rest of us.

White. Goodly? I feel most good-
ly heart and hand,

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and
all Kent.

Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it:
a jest

In time of danger shows the pulses
even.

Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look
but sad.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for
yourself,

Tho' all the world should bay like
winter wolves.

Bagenhall. Who knows? the man
is proven by the hour.

White. The man should make the
hour, not this the man;

And Thomas White will prove this
Thomas Wyatt,

And he will prove an Iden to this
Cade,

And he will play the Walworth to
this Wat;

Come, sirs, we prate; hence all —
gather your men —

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes
to Southwark;

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into
the Thames,

And see the citizens arm'd. Good
day; good day. [*Exit White.*]

Bagenhall. One of much outdoor
bluster.

Howard. For all that,
Most honest, brave, and skilful; and
his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms — his
fault

So thoroughly to believe in his own
self.

Bagenhall. Yet thoroughly to be-
lieve in one's own self,

So one's own self be thorough, were
to do

Great things, my Lord.

Howard. It may be.

Bagenhall. I have heard
One of your Council fleer and jeer at
him.

Howard. The nursery-cocker'd child
will jeer at aught

That may seem strange beyond his
nursery.

The statesman that shall jeer and fleer
at men,

Makes enemies for himself and for his
king;

And if he jeer not seeing the true
man

Behind his folly, he is thrice the
fool;

And if he see the man and still will
jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to the
State.

Who is he? let me shun him.

Bagenhall. Nay, my Lord,
He is damn'd enough already.

Howard. I must set

The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

Bagenhall. "Who knows?" I am for England. But who knows, That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope, Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen? [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — LONDON BRIDGE.

Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT and BRETT.

Wyatt. Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us Thou cried'st "A Wyatt!" and flying to our side Left his all bare, for which I love thee, Brett. Have for thine asking aught that I can give, For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge; But how to cross it balks me. I fear we cannot.

Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

Wyatt. Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett, And scared the gray old porter and his wife. And then I crept along the gloom and saw

They had hewn the drawbridge down into the river.

It roll'd as black as death; and that same tide

Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou saidest,

Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard

By torchlight, and his guard; four guns gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths: had Howard spied me there

And made them speak, as -well he might have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell you this.

What shall we do?

Brett. On somehow. To go back Were to lose all.

Wyatt. On over London Bridge We cannot: stay we cannot; there is ordnance

On the White Tower and on the Devil's Tower,

And pointed full at Southwark; we must round

By Kingston Bridge.

Brett. Ten miles about.

Wyatt. Ev'n so. But I have notice from our partisans Within the city that they will stand by us
If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-morrow.

Enter one of WYATT'S men.

Man. Sir Thomas, I've found this paper; pray your worship read it; I know not my letters; the old priests taught me nothing.

Wyatt (reads). "Whosoever will apprehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall have a hundred pounds for reward."

Man. Is that it? That's a big lot of money.

Wyatt. Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 'tis not written

Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!

[*Writes "THOMAS WYATT" large.* There, any man can read that.

[*Sticks it in his cap.*

Brett. But that's foolhardy.

Wyatt. No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

Enter MAN with a prisoner.

Man. We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

Wyatt. Gentleman! a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

Brett. Sir Thomas —

Wyatt. Hang him, I say.

Brett. Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon.

Wyatt. Ay, and I warrant this fine fellow's life.

Brett. Ev'n so; he was my neighbor once in Kent.

He's poor enough, has drunk and gambled out

All that he had, and gentleman he was.

We have been glad together; let him live.

Wyatt. He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy poor gentleman!

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight,

Or I will dig thee with my dagger.

Away!

Women and children!

Enter a Crowd of WOMEN and Children.

First Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir

Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black 'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the death on us; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

Second Woman. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

Third Woman. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin, and little Jenny — though she's but a side-cousin — and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen further off, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen

Or here or there: I come to save you all,

And I'll go further off.

Crowd. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

Wyatt. Be happy, I am your friend.
To Kingston, forward! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. — ROOM IN THE GATEHOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD,
LADIES.

Gardiner. Their cry is, Philip never shall be king.

Mary. Lord Pembroke in command of all our force

Will front their cry and shatter them into dust.

Alice. Was not Lord Pembroke with Northumberland?

O madam, if this Pembroke should be false?

Mary. No, girl; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland.

At the park gate he hovers with our guards.

These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter MESSENGER.

Messenger. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards,
And gone to Ludgate.

Gardiner. Madam, I much fear That all is lost; but we can save your Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you,

There yet is time, take boat and pass to Windsor.

Mary. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

Gardiner. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

Mary. I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower.

Cries without. The traitor! treason! Pembroke!

Ladies. Treason! treason!

Mary. Peace.

False to Northumberland, is he false to me?

Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die

The true and faithful bride of Philip — A sound

Of feet and voices thickening hither — blows —

Hark, there is battle at the palace gates,

And I will out upon the gallery.

Ladies. No, no, your Grace; see there the arrows flying.

Mary. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not fear.

[*Goes out on the gallery.*]

The guards are all driven in, skulk into corners

Like rabbits to their holes, A gracious guard

Truly; shame on them! they have shut the gates!

Enter SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

Southwell. The porter, please your Grace, hath shut the gates

On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry To have the gates set wide again, and they

With their good battleaxes will do you right

Against all traitors.

Mary. They are the flower of England; set the gates wide.

[*Exit Southwell.*]

Enter COURTENAY.

Courtenay. All lost, all lost, all yielded! a barge, a barge!

The Queen must to the Tower.

Mary. Whence come you, sir?

Courtenay. From Charing Cross; the rebels broke us there,

And I sped hither with what haste I might

To save my royal cousin.

Mary. Where is Pembroke?

Courtenay. I left him somewhere in the thick of it.

Mary. Left him and fled; and thou that would'st be King,

And hast nor heart nor honor. I myself

Will down into the battle and there
bide

The upshot of my quarrel, or die with
those

That are no cowards and no Courte-
nays.

Courtenay. I do not love your Grace
should call me coward.

Enter another MESSENGER.

Messenger. Over, your Grace, all
crush'd; the brave Lord Wil-
liam

Thrust him from Ludgate, and the
traitor flying

To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice
Berkeley

Was taken prisoner.

Mary. To the Tower with him!

Messenger. 'Tis said he told Sir
Maurice there was one

Cognizant of this, and party thereunto,
My Lord of Devon.

Mary. To the Tower with him!

Courtenay. O la, the Tower, the
Tower, always the Tower,

I shall grow into it—I shall be the
Tower.

Mary. Your lordship may not have
so long to wait.

Remove him!

Courtenay. La, to whistle out my
life,

And carve my coat upon the walls
again!

[*Exit Courtenay guarded.*]

Messenger. Also this Wyatt did
confess the Princess

Cognizant thereof, and party there-
unto.

Mary. What? whom—whom did
you say?

Messenger. Elizabeth,

Your Royal sister.

Mary. To the Tower with her!

My foes are at my feet and I am
Queen.

[*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.*]

Gardiner (rising). There let them
lie, your footstool! [*Aside.*] Can
I strike

Elizabeth?—not now and save the
life

Of Devon: if I save him, he and his
Are bound to me—may strike here-
after. [*Aloud.*] Madam,

What Wyatt said, or what they said
he said,

Cries of the moment and the street—
Mary. He said it.

Gardiner. Your courts of justice
will determine that.

Renard (advancing). I trust by this
your Highness will allow

Some spice of wisdom in my telling
you,

When last we talk'd, that Philip would
not come

Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke of
Suffolk,

And Lady Jane had left us.

Mary. They shall die.

Renard. And your so loving sister?

Mary. She shall die.

My foes are at my feet, and Philip
King. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN GRACE- CHURCH,

*Painted with the Nine Worthies, among
them King Henry VIII. holding a
book, on it inscribed "Verbum Dei."*

*Enter Sir RALPH BAGENHALL and Sir
THOMAS STAFFORD.*

Bagenhall. A hundred here and
hundreds hang'd in Kent.

The tigress had unsheath'd her nails
at last,

And Renard and the Chancellor sharp-
en'd them.

In every London street a gibbet
stood.

They are down to-day. Here by this
house was one;

The traitor husband dangled at the
door,

And when the traitor wife came out
for bread

To still the petty treason therewithin,
Her cap would brush his heels.

Stafford. It is Sir Ralph,

And muttering to himself as hereto-
fore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder?

Bagenhall. I miss something.

The tree that only bears dead fruit is
gone.

Stafford. What tree, sir?

Bagenhall. Well, the tree in
Virgil, sir,

That bears not its own apples.

Stafford. What! the gallows?

Bagenhall. Sir, this dead fruit was
ripening overmuch,

And had to be removed lest living
Spain

Should sicken at dead England.

Stafford. Not so dead,

But that a shock may rouse her.

Bagenhall. I believe

Sir Thomas Stafford?

Stafford. I am ill disguised.

Bagenhall. Well, are you not in
peril here?

Stafford. I think so.

I came to feel the pulse of England,
whether

It beats hard at this marriage. Did you see it?

Bagenhall. Stafford, I am a sad man and a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall
Been reading some old book, with
mine old hound

Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old
flask of wine

Beside me, than have seen it: yet I
saw it.

Stafford. Good, was it splendid?

Bagenhall. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cavaliers,

Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,
pearls,

That royal commonplace too, cloth
of gold,

Could make it so.

Stafford. And what was Mary's
dress?

Bagenhall. Good faith, I was too
sorry for the woman

To mark the dress. She wore red
shoes!

Stafford. Red shoes!

Bagenhall. Scarlet, as if her feet
were wash'd in blood,

As if she had waded in it.

Stafford. Were your eyes

So bashful that you look'd no higher?

Bagenhall. A diamond,

And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's
love,

Who hath not any for any,—tho' a
true one,

Blazed false upon her heart.

Stafford. But this proud Prince—

Bagenhall. Nay, he is King, you
know, the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son
Being a King, might wed a Queen—

O he

Flamed in brocade—white satin his
trunkhose,

Inwrought with silver,—on his neck
a collar,

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging
down from this

The Golden Fleece—and round his
knee, misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with
great emeralds,

Rubies, I know not what. Have you
had enough

Of all this gear?

Stafford. Ay, since you hate the
telling it.

How look'd the Queen?

Bagenhall. No fairer for her jewels.

And I could see that as the new-made
couple

Came from the Minster, moving side
by side

Beneath one canopy, ever and anon

She cast on him a vassal smile of
love,

Which Philip with a glance of some
distaste,

Or so methought, return'd. I may be
wrong, sir.

This marriage will not hold.

Stafford. I think with you.

The King of France will help to break
it.

Bagenhall. France!

We once had half of France, and
hurl'd our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England
now

Is but a ball chuck'd between France
and Spain,

His in whose hand she drops; Harry
of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering
throne to stand,

Could Harry have foreseen that all
our nobles

Would perish on the civil slaughter-
field,

And leave the people naked to the
crown,

And the crown naked to the people;
the crown

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regimen
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I

think,

Never to rise again.

Stafford. You are too black-
blooded.

I'd make a move myself to hinder
that:

I know some lusty fellows there in
France.

Bagenhall. You would but make us
weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he
fail'd,

And strengthen'd Philip.

Stafford. Did not his last breath
Clear Courtenay and the Princess

from the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

Bagenhall. Ay, but then
What such a one as Wyatt says is

nothing:

We have no men among us. The new
Lords

Are quieted with their sop of Abbey-
lands,

And ev'n before the Queen's face
Gardiner buys them

With Philip's gold. All greed, no
faith, no courage!

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, North-
umberland,

The leader of our Reformation,
knelt

And blubber'd like a lad, and on the
scaffold

Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

Stafford. I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.
 I know a set of exiles over there, Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out
 At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain already.
 The French King winks at it. An hour will come
 When they will sweep her from the seas. No men?
 Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true man?
 Is not Lord William Howard a true man?
 Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-blooded:
 And I, by God, believe myself a man. Ay, even in the church there is a man —
 Cranmer.
 Fly would he not, when all men bade him fly.
 And what a letter he wrote against the Pope!
 There's a brave man, if any.
Bagenhall. Ay; if it hold.
Crowd (coming on). God save their Graces!
Stafford. Bagenhall, I see
 The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*) They are coming now.
 And here's a crowd as thick as her-ring-shoals.
Bagenhall. Be limpets to this pillar, or we are torn
 Down the strong wave of brawlers.
Crowd. God save their Graces!
 [*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-men, etc.; then Spanish and Flemish Nobles intermingled.*]
Stafford. Worth seeing, Bagenhall!
 These black dog-Dons
 Garb themselves bravely. Who's the long-face there,
 Looks very Spain of very Spain?
Bagenhall. The Duke
 Of Alva, an iron soldier.
Stafford. And the Dutchman,
 Now laughing at some jest?
Bagenhall. William of Orange,
 William the Silent.
Stafford. Why do they call him so?
Bagenhall. He keeps, they say, some secret that may cost
 Philip his life.
Stafford. But then he looks so merry.
Bagenhall. I cannot tell you why they call him so.
 [*The King and Queen pass, attended by Peers of the Realm, Officers of State, etc. Cannon shot off.*]
Crowd. Philip and Mary, Philip and Mary!

Long live the King and Queen, Philip and Mary!

Stafford. They smile as if content with one another.

Bagenhall. A smile abroad is oft a scowl at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*]

First Citizen. I thought this Philip had been one of those black devils of Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

Second Citizen. Not red like Iscariot's.

First Citizen. Like a carrot's, as thou say'st, and English carrot's better than Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a beast.

Third Citizen. Certain I had heard that every Spaniard carries a tail like a devil under his trunk-hose.

Tailor. Ay, but see what trunk-hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd none such. They make amends for the tails.

Fourth Citizen. Tut! every Spanish priest will tell you that all English heretics have tails.

Fifth Citizen. Death and the Devil — if he find I have one —

Fourth Citizen. Lo! thou hast call'd them up! here they come — a pale horse for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

Enter GARDINER (turning back from the procession).

Gardiner. Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen?

Man. My Lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd

I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

Gardiner. Knock off his cap there, some of you about him!

See there be others that can use their hands.

Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

Man. No, my Lord, no.

Gardiner. Thy name, thou knave?

Man. I am nobody, my Lord.

Gardiner (shouting). God's passion! knave, thy name?

Man. I have ears to hear.

Gardiner. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee ears to hear.

Find out his name and bring it me (*to Attendant*).

Attendant. Ay, my Lord.

Gardiner. Knave, thou shalt lose

thine ears and find thy tongue,

And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that. [*Coming before the Conduit.*]

The conduit painted — the nine worthies — ay!

But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll.

Ha — Verbum Dei — verbum — word
of God!

God's passion! do you know the knave
that painted it?

Attendant. I do, my Lord.

Gardiner. Tell him to paint it out,
And put some fresh device in lieu of
it —

A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir;
ha?

There is no heresy there.

Attendant. I will, my Lord;
The man shall paint a pair of gloves.

I am sure

(Knowing the man) he wrought it
ignorantly,

And not from any malice.

Gardiner. Word of God
In English! over this the brainless
loons

That cannot spell Esaias from St.
Paul,

Make themselves drunk and mad, fly
out and flare

Into rebellions. I'll have their bibles
burnt.

The bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow,
what!

Stand staring at me! shout, you gap-
ing rogue!

Man. I have, my Lord, shouted till
I am hoarse.

Gardiner. What hast thou shouted,
knave?

Man. Long live Queen Mary!

Gardiner. Knave, there be two,
There be both King and Queen.

Philip and Mary. Shout!

Man. Nay, but, my Lord,
The Queen comes first, Mary and
Philip.

Gardiner. Shout, then,
Mary and Philip!

Man. Mary and Philip!

Gardiner. Now,
Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure,
shout for mine!

Philip and Mary!

Man. Must it be so, my Lord?

Gardiner. Ay, knave.

Man. Philip and Mary!

Gardiner. I distrust thee.

Thine is a half voice and a lean
assent.

What is thy name?

Man. Sanders.

Gardiner. What else?

Man. Zerubbabel.

Gardiner. Where dost thou live?

Man. In Cornhill.

Gardiner. Where, knave, where?

Man. Sign of the Talbot.

Gardiner. Come to me to-morrow. —
Rascal! this land is like a hill of
fire,

One crater opens when another shuts.

But so I get the laws against the
heretic,

Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William
Howard,

And others of our Parliament, revived,
I will show fire on my side — stake
and fire —

Sharp work and short. The knaves
are easily cow'd.

Follow their Majesties.

[*Exit. The crowd following.*]

Bagenhall. As proud as Becket.

Stafford. You would not have him
murder'd as Becket was?

Bagenhall. No — murder fathers
murder: but I say

There is no man — there was one
woman with us —

It was a sin to love her married, dead
I cannot choose but love her.

Stafford. Lady Jane?

Crowd (going off). God save their
Graces!

Stafford. Did you see her die?

Bagenhall. No, no; her innocent
blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded — true
enough

Her dark dead blood is in my heart
with mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope
Her dark dead blood that ever moves

with mine

Will stir the living tongue and make
the cry.

Stafford. Yet doubtless you can tell
me how she died?

Bagenhall. Seventeen — and knew
eight languages — in music

Peerless — her needle perfect, and her
learning

Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek,
so modest,

So wife-like humble to the trivial boy
Mismatch'd with her for policy! I

have heard

She would not take a last farewell of
him,

She fear'd it might unman him for his
end.

She could not be unmann'd — no, nor
outwoman'd —

Seventeen — a rose of grace!
Girl never breathed to rival such

a rose;

Rose never blew that equal'd such a
bud.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. She came upon the scaf-
fold,

And said she was condemn'd to die
for treason;

She had but follow'd the device of
those

Her nearest kin: she thought they
knew the laws.

But for herself, she knew but little
law,
And nothing of the titles to the
crown;
She had no desire for that, and wrung
her hands,
And trusted God would save her thro'
the blood
Of Jesus Christ alone.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. Then knelt and said the
Miserere Mei —

But all in English, mark you; rose
again,
And, when the headsman pray'd to be
forgiven,

Said "You will give me my true crown
at last,

But do it quickly;" then all wept but
she,

Who changed not color when she saw
the block,

But ask'd him, childlike: "Will you
take it off

Before I lay me down?" "No,
madam," he said,

Gasping; and when her innocent eyes
were bound,

She, with her poor blind hands feel-
ing — "where is it?

Where is it?" — You must fancy that
which follow'd,

If you have heart to do it!

Crowd (in the distance). God—save
their Graces!

Stafford. Their Graces, our dis-
graces! God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I
last was here,

This was against her conscience —
would be murder!

Bagenhall. The "Thou shalt do no
murder," which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd
out pale —

She could not make it white — and
over that,

Traced in the blackest text of Hell —
"Thou shalt!"

And sign'd it — Mary!

Stafford. Philip and the Pope

Must have sign'd too. I hear this
Legate's coming

To bring us absolution from the Pope.
The Lords and Commons will bow

down before him —

You are of the house? what will you
do, Sir Ralph?

Bagenhall. And why should I be
bolder than the rest,

Or honestier than all?

Stafford. But, sir, if I —

And oversea they say this state of
yours

Hath no more mortice than a tower of
cards;

And that a puff would do it — then
if I

And others made that move I touch'd
upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and
landing here,

Came with a sudden splendor, shout,
and show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by
some bright

Loud venture, and the people so un-
quiet —

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-
ham —

Not for myself, but for the kingdom
— Sir,

I trust that you would fight along
with us.

Bagenhall. No; you would fling
your lives into the gulf.

Stafford. But if this Philip, as he's
like to do,

Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads

hither

To seize upon the forts and fleet, and
make us

A Spanish province; would you not
fight then?

Bagenhall. I think I should fight
then.

Stafford. I am sure of it.

Hist! there's the face coming on here
of one

Who knows me. I must leave you.
Fare you well,

You'll hear of me again.

Bagenhall. Upon the scaffold.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — ROOM IN WHITEHALL PALACE.

MARY. *Enter PHILIP and*
CARDINAL POLE.

Pole. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Bene-
dicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin,
humblest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the
river?

Pole. We had your royal barge, and
that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the

prow,

The ripples twinkled at their diamond-
dance,

The boats that follow'd, were as glow-
ing-gay

As regal gardens; and your flocks of
swans,

As fair and white as angels; and your
shores

Wore in mine eyes the green of Paradise.

My foreign friends, who dream'd us blanketed

In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd

Upon their lake of Garda, fire the Thames ;

Our voyage by sea was all but miracle ;
And here the river flowing from the sea,

Not toward it (for they thought not of our tides),

Seem'd as a happy miracle to make glide—

In quiet—home your banish'd countryman.

Mary. We heard that you were sick in Flanders, cousin.

Pole. A dizziness.

Mary. And how came you round again ?

Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab saved her life ;

And mine, a little letting of the blood.

Mary. Well ? now ?

Pole. Ay, cousin, as the heathen giant

Had but to touch the ground, his force return'd—

Thus, after twenty years of banishment,

Feeling my native land beneath my foot,

I said thereto : " Ah, native land of mine,

Thou art much beholden to this foot of mine,

That hastes with full commission from the Pope

To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy.

Thou hast disgraced me and attained me,

And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return

As Peter, but to bless thee : make me well."

Methinks the good land heard me, for to-day

My heart beats twenty, when I see you, cousin.

Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's death,

How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's gate !

And Mary would have risen and let him in,

But, Mary, there were those within the house

Who would not have it.

Mary. True, good cousin Pole ;
And there were also those without the house

Who would not have it.

Pole. I believe so, cousin.
State-policy and church-policy are conjoint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.
I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.

But all is well ; 'twas ev'n the will of God,

Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd, now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting. " Hail,

Daughter of God, and savor of the faith,

Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui ! "

Mary. Ah, heaven !

Pole. Unwell, your Grace ?

Mary. No, cousin, happy—
Happy to see you ; never yet so happy
Since I was crown'd.

Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget
That long low minster where you gave your hand

To this great Catholic King.

Philip. Well said, Lord Legate.

Mary. Nay, not well said ; I thought of you my liege,
Ev'n as I spoke.

Philip. Ay, Madam ; my Lord Paget
Waits to present our Council to the Legate.

Sit down here, all ; Madam, between us you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed
with boards of cedar,

Our little sister of the Song of Songs !
You are doubly fenced and shielded
sitting here

Between the two most high-set thrones
on earth,

The Emperor's highness happily symbol'd by

The King your husband, the Pope's Holiness

By mine own self.

Mary. True, cousin, I am happy.
When will you that we summon both
our houses

To take this absolution from your lips,
And be regather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the
brightest day

Beheld our rough forefathers break
their Gods,

And clasp the faith in Christ ; but
after that

Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest day ?

Mary. Then these shall meet upon
St. Andrew's day.

Enter PAGET, who presents the Council.
Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with
my journey,

Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to withdraw.

To Lambeth?

Philip. Ay, Lambeth has ousted Cranmer.

It was not meet the heretic swine should live

In Lambeth.

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.

Philip. We have had it swept and garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to enter in!

Philip. No, for we trust they parted in the swine.

Pole. True, and I am the Angel of the Pope.

Farewell, your Graces.

Philip. Nay, not here — to me; I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the counter side?

Philip. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world; but Lambeth palace,

Henceforth a centre of the living faith.

[*Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, etc.*

Manet Mary.

Mary. He hath awaked! he hath awaked!

He stirs within the darkness!

Oh, Philip, husband! now thy love to mine

Will cling more close, and those bleak manners thaw,

That make me shamed and tongue-tied in my love.

The second Prince of Peace —

The great unborn defender of the Faith,

Who will avenge me of mine enemies —

He comes, and my star rises.

The stormy Wyatts and Northumberland,

The proud ambitions of Elizabeth, And all her fieriest partisans — are pale

Before my star!

The light of this new learning wanes and dies:

The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius fade

Into the deathless hell which is their doom

Before my star!

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to Ind!

His sword shall hew the heretic peoples down!

His faith shall clothe the world that will be his,

Like universal air and sunshine! Open,

Ye everlasting gates! The King is here! —

My star, my son!

Enter PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, etc.

Oh, Philip, come with me; Good news have I to tell you, news to make

Both of us happy — ay, the Kingdom too.

Nay come with me — one moment!

Philip (to Alva). More than that: There was one here of late — William the Silent

They call him — he is free enough in talk,

But tells me nothing. You will be, we trust,

Sometime the viceroy of those provinces —

He must deserve his surname better.

Alva. Ay, sir;

Inherit the Great Silence.

Philip. True; the provinces Are hard to rule and must be hardly

ruled;

Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty rind,

All hollow'd out with stinging heresies;

And for their heresies, Alva, they will fight;

You must break them or they break you.

Alva (proudly). The first.

Philip. Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine?

[*Exeunt.*

Enter THREE PAGES.

First Page. News, mates! a miracle, a miracle! news!

The bell must ring; Te Deums must be sung;

The Queen hath felt the motion of her babe!

Second Page. Ay; but see here!

First Page. See what?

Second Page. This paper, Dickon.

I found it fluttering at the palace gates: —

"The Queen of England is delivered of a dead dog!"

Third Page. These are the things that madden her. Fie upon it!

First Page. Fie on her dropsy, lad,

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

Third Page. Fie on her dropsy, so she have a dropsy!

First Page. I know that she was ever sweet to me.

Third Page. For thou and thine are Roman to the core.

First Page. So thou and thine must be. Take heed!

Third Page. Not I,

And whether this flash of news be
false or true,
So the wine run, and there be revelry,
Content am I. Let all the steeples
clash,
Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — GREAT HALL IN
WHITEHALL.

*At the far end a dais. On this three
chairs, two under one canopy for MARY
and PHILIP, another on the right of
these for POLE. Under the dais on
POLE's side, ranged along the wall, sit
all the Spiritual Peers, and along the
wall opposite, all the Temporal. The
Commons on cross benches in front, a
line of approach to the dais between
them. In the foreground, SIR RALPH
BAGENHALL and other Members of
the Commons.*

First Member. St. Andrew's day;
sit close, sit close, we are friends.
Is reconciled the word? the Pope
again?

It must be thus; and yet, cocksbody!
how strange

That Gardiner, once so one with all of us
Against this foreign marriage, should
have yielded

So utterly! — strange! but stranger
still that he,

So fierce against the Headship of the
Pope,

Should play the second actor in this
pageant

That brings him in; such aameleon
he!

Second Member. This Gardiner
turn'd his coat in Henry's time;
The serpent that hath slough'd will
slough again.

Third Member. Tut, then we all are
serpents.

Second Member. Speak for yourself.

Third Member. Ay, and for Gar-
diner! being English citizen,
How should he bear a bridegroom
out of Spain?

The Queen would have him! being
English churchman

How should he bear the headship of
the Pope?

The Queen would have it! Statesmen
that are wise

Shape a necessity, as a sculptor clay,
To their own model.

Second Member. Statesmen that are
wise

Take truth herself for model. What
say you? [To Sir Ralph
Bagenhall.

Bagenhall. We talk and talk.

First Member. Ay, and what use to
talk?

Philip's no sudden alien — the Queen's
husband,

He's here, and king, or will be — yet
cocksbody!

So hated here! I watch'd a hive of
late;

My seven-years' friend was with me,
my young boy;

Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm
behind.

"Philip!" says he. I had to cuff the
rogue

For infant treason.

Third Member. But they say that
bees,

If any creeping life invade their hive
Too gross to be thrust out, will build
him round,

And bind him in from harming of
their combs.

And Philip by these articles is bound
From stirring hand or foot to wrong
the realm.

Second Member. By bonds of bees-
wax, like your creeping thing;

But your wise bees had stung him first
to death.

Third Member. Hush, hush!
You wrong the Chancellor: the clauses
added

To that same treaty which the em-
peror sent us

Were mainly Gardiner's: that no for-
eigner

Hold office in the household, fleet,
forts, army;

That if the Queen should die without
a child,

The bond between the kingdoms be
dissolved;

That Philip should not mix us any way
With his French wars —

Second Member. Ay, ay, but what
security,

Good sir, for this, if Philip —

Third Member. Peace — the Queen,
Philip, and Pole. [*All rise, and stand.*]

Enter MARY, PHILIP, and POLE.

[Gardiner conducts them to the three
chairs of state. Philip sits on the
Queen's left, Pole on her right.

Gardiner. Our short-lived sun, before
his winter plunge,

Laughs at the last red leaf, and An-
drew's Day.

Mary. Should not this day be held
in after years

More solemn than of old?

Philip. Madam, my wish
Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Gardiner. Mine echoes both your Graces'; (*aside*) but the Pope —
 Can we not have the Catholic church as well
 Without as with the Italian? if we cannot,
 Why then the Pope.
 My lords of the upper house,
 And ye, my masters, of the lower house,
 Do ye stand fast by that which ye resolved?
Voices. We do.
Gardiner. And be you all one mind to supplicate
 The Legate here for pardon, and acknowledgement
 The primacy of the Pope?
Voices. We are all one mind.
Gardiner. Then must I play the vassal to this Pole. [*Aside.*
[He draws a paper from under his robes and presents it to the King and Queen, who look through it and return it to him; then ascends a tribune, and reads.
 We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
 And Commons here in Parliament assembled,
 Presenting the whole body of this realm
 Of England, and dominions of the same,
 Do make most humble suit unto your Majesties,
 In our own name and that of all the state,
 That by your gracious means and intercession
 Our supplication be exhibited
 To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here as Legate
 From our most Holy Father Julius, Pope,
 And from the Apostolic see of Rome;
 And do declare our penitence and grief
 For our long schism and disobedience,
 Either in making laws and ordinances
 Against the Holy Father's primacy,
 Or else by doing or by speaking aught
 Which might impugn or prejudice the same;
 By this our supplication promising,
 As well for our own selves as all the realm,
 That now we be and ever shall be quick,
 Under and with your Majesties' authorities,
 To do to the utmost all that in us lies
 Towards the abrogation and repeal
 Of all such laws and ordinances made;

Whereon we humbly pray your Majesties,
 As persons undefiled with our offence,
 So to set forth this humble suit of ours
 That we the rather by your intercession
 May from the Apostolic see obtain,
 Thro' this most reverend Father, absolution,
 And full release from danger of all censures
 Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,
 So that we may, as children penitent,
 Be once again received into the bosom
 And unity of Universal Church;
 And that this noble realm thro' after years
 May in this unity and obedience
 Unto the holy see and reigning Pope
 Serve God and both your Majesties.
Voices. Amen. [*All sit.*
[He again presents the petition to the King and Queen, who hand it reverentially to Pole.
Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest day that ever smiled
 On England. All her breath should, incenselike,
 Rise to the heavens in grateful praise of Him
 Who now recalls her to His ancient fold.
 Lo! once again God to this realm hath given
 A token of His more especial Grace;
 For as this people were the first of all
 The islands call'd into the dawning church
 Out of the dead, deep night of heathendom,
 So now are these the first whom God hath given
 Grace to repent and sorrow for their schism;
 And if your penitence be not mockery,
 Oh how the blessed angels who rejoice
 Over one saved do triumph at this hour
 In the reborn salvation of a land
 So noble. [*A pause.*
 For ourselves we do protest
 That our commission is to heal, not harm;
 We come not to condemn, but reconcile;
 We come not to compel, but call again;
 We come not to destroy, but edify;
 Nor yet to question things already done;
 These are forgiven — matters of the past —
 And range with jetsam and with offal thrown
 Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.
 [*A pause.*
 Ye have reversed the attainder laid on us

By him who sack'd the house of God ;
and we,
Amplier than any field on our poor
earth
Can render thanks in fruit for being
sown,
Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-
fold,
With heaven for earth.

[*Rising and stretching forth his hands. All kneel but Sir Ralph Bagenhall, who rises and remains standing.*]

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
With His own blood, and wash'd us
from our sins,

To purchase for Himself a stainless
bride ;

He, whom the Father hath appointed
Head

Of all his church, He by His mercy
absolve you ! [A pause.

And we by that authority Apostolic
Given unto us, his Legate, by the Pope,
Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon
earth,

Do here absolve you and deliver
you

And every one of you, and all the
realm

And its dominions from all heresy,
All schism, and from all and every
censure,

Judgment, and pain accruing there-
upon ;

And also we restore you to the bosom
And unity of Universal Church.

[*Turning to Gardiner.*]

Our letters of commission will declare
this plainlier.

[*Queen heard sobbing. Cries of Amen! Amen! Some of the Members embrace one another. All but Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out into the neighboring chapel, whence is heard the Te Deum.*]

Bagenhall. We strove against the
papacy from the first,

In William's time, in our first Ed-
ward's time,

And in my master Henry's time ; but
now,

The unity of Universal Church,
Mary would have it ; and this Gardi-
ner follows ;

The unity of Universal Hell,
Philip would have it ; and this Gardi-
ner follows !

A Parliament of imitative apes !
Sheep at the gap which Gardiner
takes, who not

Believes the Pope, nor any of them
believe —

These spaniel-Spaniard English of the
time,

Who rub their fawning noses in the
dust,

For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore
This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I
had been

Born Spaniard ! I had held my head
up then.

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
English.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Sir Ralph Bagenhall !

Bagenhall. What of that ?

Officer. You were the one sole man
in either house

Who stood upright when both the
houses fell.

Bagenhall. The houses fell !

Officer. I mean the houses knelt
Before the Legate.

Bagenhall. Do not scrimp your
phrase,

But stretch it wider ; say when Eng-
land fell.

Officer. I say you were the one sole
man who stood.

Bagenhall. I am the one sole man
in either house,

Perchance in England, loves her like
a son.

Officer. Well, you one man, because
you stood upright,

Her Grace the Queen commands you
to the Tower.

Bagenhall. As traitor, or as heretic,
or for what ?

Officer. If any man in any way
would be

The one man, he shall be soto his cost.

Bagenhall. What ! will she have
my head ?

Officer. A round fine likelier.

Your pardon. [Calling to Attendant.

By theriverto the Tower. [Exit.

SCENE IV. — WHITEHALL. A ROOM
IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, POLE, PAGET,
BONNER, etc.

Mary. The King and I, my Lords,
now that all traitors

Against our royal state have lost the
heads

Wherewith they plotted in their trea-
sonous malice,

Have talk'd together, and are well
agreed

That those old statutes touching
Lollardism

To bring the heretic to the stake,
should be

No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

One of the Council. Why, what hath fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs His forelock!

Paget. I have changed a word with him
In coming, and may change a word again.

Gardiner. Madam, your Highness is our sun, the King
And you together our two suns in one;

And so the beams of both may shine upon us,
The faith that seem'd to droop will feel your light,
Lift head, and flourish; yet not light alone,

There must be heat — there must be heat enough
To scorch and wither heresy to the root.

For what saith Christ? "Compel them to come in."
And what saith Paul? "I would they were cut off
That trouble you." Let the dead letter live!

Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and grooms
May read it! so you quash rebellion too,

For heretic and traitor are all one:
Two vipers of one breed — an amphibæna,
Each end a sting: Let the dead letter burn!

Paget. Yet there be some disloyal Catholics,
And many heretics loyal; heretic throats

Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,
But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.

To take the lives of others that are loyal,
And by the churchman's pitiless doom of fire,
Were but a thankless policy in the crown,
Ay, and against itself; for there are many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy, my Lord Paget,
We reck not tho' we lost this crown of England —

Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

Gardiner. Right, your Grace.
Paget. you are all for this poor life of ours.

And care but little for the life to be.

Paget. I have some time, for curiousness, my Lord,
Watch'd children playing at *their* life to be,
And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;
Such is our time — all times for aught I know.

Gardiner. We kill the heretics that sting the soul —
They, with right reason, flies that prick the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right reason; little children!
They kill'd but for their pleasure and the power
They felt in killing.

Gardiner. A spice of Satan, ha! Why, good! what then? granted! — we are fallen creatures;
Look to your Bible, Paget! we are fallen.

Paget. I am but of the laity, my Lord Bishop,
And may not read your Bible, yet I found

One day, a wholesome scripture, "Little children,
Love one another."

Gardiner. Did you find a scripture, "I come not to bring peace but a sword"? The sword
Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.

Paget.
You stand up here to fight for heresy,
You are more than guess'd at as a heretic,
And on the steep-up track of the true faith
Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless Gardiner!
Mary. You brawl beyond the question; speak, Lord Legate!

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with your Grace:
Rather would say — the shepherd doth not kill

The sheep that wander from his flock, but sends
His careful dog to bring them to the fold.

Look to the Netherlands, wherein have been
Such holocausts of heresy! to what end?

For yet the faith is not established there.

Gardiner. The end's not come.
Pole. No — nor this way will come,

Seeing there lie two ways to every end,
A better and a worse — the worse is here

To persecute, because to persecute

Makes a faith hated, and is further-
more

No perfect witness of a perfect faith
In him who persecutes : when men are
tost

On tides of strange opinion, and not
sure

Of their own selves, they are wroth
with their own selves,

And thence with others; then, who
lights the faggot?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking
doubt.

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in
the Church,

Trembled for her own gods, for these
were trembling—

But when did our Rome tremble?

Paget. Did she not
In Henry's time and Edward's?

Pole. What, my Lord!
The Church on Peter's rock? never!

I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow
Athwart a cataract; firm stood the
pine—

The cataract shook the shadow. To
my mind,

The cataract typed the headlong
plunge and fall

Of heresy to the pit: the pine was
Rome.

You see, my Lords,

It was the shadow of the Church that
trembled;

Your church was but the shadow of a
church;

Wanting the Papal mitre.

Gardiner (*muttering*). Here be
tropes.

Pole. And tropes are good to clothe
a naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

Gardiner. Tropes again!

Pole. You are hard to please. Then
without tropes, my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat,
When faith is wavering makes the

waverer pass

Into more settled hatred of the doc-
trines

Of those who rule, which hatred by
and by

Involves the ruler (thus there springs
to light

That Centaur of a monstrous Com-
monweal,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some
may quail,

Yet others are that dare the stake and
fire,

And their strong torment bravely
borne, begets

An admiration and an indignation,
And hot desire to imitate; so the

plague

Of schism spreads; were there but
three or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not
say

Burn! and we cannot burn whole
towns; they are many,

As my Lord Paget says.

Gardiner. Yet my Lord Cardinal—

Pole. I am your Legate; please you
let me finish.

Methinks that under our Queen's
regimen

We might go softer than with crim-
son rowel

And streaming lash. When Herod—
Henry first

Began to batter at your English
Church,

This was the cause, and hence the
judgment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and
the lives

Of many among your churchmen were
so foul

That heaven wept and earth blush'd.
I would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse
the Church within

Before these bitter statutes be requick-
en'd.

So after that when she once more is
seen

White as the light, the spotless bride
of Christ,

Like Christ himself on Tabor, pos-
sibly

The Lutheran may be won to her
again;

Till when, my Lords, I counsel toler-
ance.

Gardiner. What, if a mad dog bit
your hand, my Lord,

Would you not chop the bitten finger
off,

Lest your whole body should madden
with the poison?

I would not, were I Queen, tolerate
the heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a
land

Is bounden by his power and place to
see

His people be not poison'd. Tolerate
them!

Why? do they tolerate you? Nay,
many of them

Would burn—have burnt each other;
call they not

The one true faith, a loathsome idol-
worship?

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier
crime

Than heresy is itself; beware, I say,
Lest men accuse you of indifference

To all faiths, all religion; for you
know

Right well that you yourself have been
supposed
Tainted with Lutheranism it Italy.

Pole (angered). But you, my Lord,
beyond all supposition,
In clear and open day were congruent
With that vile Cranmer in the ac-
cursed lie
Of good Queen Catherine's divorce —
the spring
Of all those evils that have flow'd
upon us;
For you yourself have truckled to the
tyrant,
And done your best to bastardize our
Queen,
For which God's righteous judgment
fell upon you
In your five years of imprisonment,
my Lord,
Under young Edward. Who so bol-
ster'd up
The gross King's headship of the
Church, or more
Denied the Holy Father!

Gardiner. Ha! what! eh?
But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentle-
man,
A bookman, flying from the heat and
tussle,
You lived among your vines and
oranges,
In your soft Italy yonder! You were
sent for,
You were appeal'd to, but you still
preferr'd
Your learned leisure. As for what I
did
I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord
Legate
And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now
to learn
That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my
Lord.

Pole. But not for five-and-twenty
years, my Lord.

Gardiner. Ha! good! it seems then
I was summon'd hither
But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,
friend Bonner,
And tell this learned Legate he lacks
zeal.
The Church's evil is not as the
King's,
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The
mad bite
Must have the cautery — tell him —
and at once.
What would'st thou do hadst thou his
power, thou
That layest so long in heretic bonds
with me;
Would'st thou not burn and blast them
root and branch?

Bonner. Ay, after you, my Lord.

Gardiner. Nay, God's passion, be-
fore me! speak!

Bonner. I am on fire until I see
them flame.

Gardiner. Ay, the psalm-singing
weavers, cobblers, scum —
But this most noble prince Planta-
genet,
Our good Queen's cousin — dallying
over seas
Even when his brother's, nay, his
noble mother's,
Head fell —

Pole. Peace, madman!
Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst
not fathom.

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord
Chancellor
Of England! no more rein upon thine
anger

Than any child! Thou mak'st me
much ashamed

That I was for a moment wroth at
thee.

Mary. I come for counsel and ye
give me feuds,

Like dogs that set to watch their mas-
ter's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the
walls,

To worrying one another. My Lord
Chancellor,

You have an old trick of offending
us;

And but that you are art and part
with us

In purging heresy, well we might, for
this

Your violence and much roughness to
the Legate,

Have shut you from our counsels.
Cousin Pole,

You are fresh from brighter lands.
Retire with me.

His Highness and myself (so you
allow us)

Will let you learn in peace and pri-
vacy

What power this cooler sun of Eng-
land hath

In breeding godless vermin. And
pray Heaven

That you may see according to our
sight.

Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt Queen and Pole, etc.*]

Gardiner. Pole has the Plantagenet
face,

But not the force made them our
mightiest kings.

Fine eyes — but melancholy, irreso-
lute —

A fine beard, Bonner, a very full fine
beard.

But a weak mouth, an indeterminate
— ha?

Bonner. Well, a weak mouth, perchance.

Gardiner. And not like thine
To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or raw.

Bonner. I'd do my best, my Lord;
but yet the Legate
Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,
And if he go not with you —

Gardiner. Tut, Master Bishop,
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he flush'd?
Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
He'll burn a diocese to prove his orthodoxy.

And let him call me truckler. In those times,
Thou knowest we had to dodge, or duck, or die;

I kept my head for use of Holy Church;

And see you, we shall have to dodge again,

And let the Pope trample our rights, and plunge

His foreign fist into our island Church
To plump the leaner pouch of Italy.
For a time, for a time.

Why? that these statutes may be put in force,

And that his fan may thoroughly purge his floor.

Bonner. So then you hold the Pope —

Gardiner. I hold the Pope!
What do I hold him? what do I hold the Pope?

Come, come, the morsel stuck — this Cardinal's fault —

I have gulped it down. I am wholly for the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
The Eternal Peter of the changeless chair,

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred king of kings,

God upon earth! what more? what would you have?

Hence, let's be gone.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Well that you be not gone,
My lord. The Queen, most wroth at first with you,

Is now content to grant you full forgiveness,

So that you crave full pardon of the Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.

Gardiner. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!

Did you hear 'em? were you by?

Usher. I cannot tell you,

His bearing is so courtly-delicate;
And yet methinks he falters: their two Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin him,

So press on him the duty which as Legate

He owes himself, and with such royal smiles —

Gardiner. Smiles that burn men.

Bonner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha? 'fore God, we change and change;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doctors tell you,

At three-score years; then if we change at all

We needs must do it quickly; it is an age

Of brief life, and brief purpose, and brief patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry for it

If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend Cranmer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd so often,

He knows not where he stands, which, if this pass,

We two shall have to teach him; let 'em look to it,

Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is come,

Their hour is hard at hand, their "dies Iræ,"

Their "dies Illa," which will test their sect.

I feel it but a duty — you will find in it

Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bonner, —

To test their sect. Sir, I attend the Queen

To crave most humble pardon — of her most

Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin,
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. — WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

Elizabeth. So they have sent poor Courtenay over sea.

Lady. And banish'd us to Woodstock, and the fields.

The colors of our Queen are green and white,

These fields are only green, they make me gape.

Elizabeth. There's whitethorn, girl.

Lady. Ay, for an hour in May.
But court is always May, buds out in masques,

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and
flowers

In silken pageants. Why do they
keep us here ?

Why still suspect your Grace ?

Elizabeth. Hard upon both.
[*Writes on the window with a diamond.*

Much suspected, of me
Nothing proven can be.
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

Lady. What hath your Highness
written ?

Elizabeth. A true rhyme.

Lady. Cut with a diamond ; so to
last like truth.

Elizabeth. Ay, if truth last.

Lady. But truth, they say, will out,
So it must last. It is not like a word,
That comes and goes in uttering.

Elizabeth. Truth, a word !
The very Truth and very Word are
one.

But truth of story, which I glanced
at, girl,

Is like a word that comes from olden
days,

And passes thro' the peoples : every
tongue

Alters it passing, till it spells and
speaks

Quite other than at first.

Lady. I do not follow.

Elizabeth. How many names in the
long sweep of time

That so foreshortens greatness, may
but hang

On the chance mention of some fool
that once

Brake bread with us, perhaps : and
my poor chronicle

Is but of glass. Sir Henry Beding-
field

May split it for a spite.

Lady. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's innocence,
Till doomsday melt it.

Elizabeth. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled under-
foot

And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,
And char us back again into the dust
We spring from. Never peacock
against rain

Scream'd as you did for water.

Lady. And I got it.
I woke Sir Henry — and he's true to
you —

I read his honest horror in his eyes.

Elizabeth. Or true to you ?

Lady. Sir Henry Bedingfield !
I will have no man true to me, your
Grace,

But one that pares his nails ; to me ?
the clown !

Elizabeth. Out, girl ! you wrong a
noble gentleman.

Lady. For, like his cloak, his man-
ners want the nap

And gloss of court ; but of this fire he
says,

Nay swears, it was no wicked wilful-
ness,

Only a natural chance.

Elizabeth. A chance — perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men
make,

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I
know

They hunt my blood. Save for my
daily range

Among the pleasant fields of Holy
Writ

I might despair. But there hath
some one come ;

The house is all in movement. Hence,
and see. [*Exit Lady.*

Milkmaid (singing without).

Shame upon you, Robin,

Shame upon you now !

Kiss me would you ? with my hands

Milking the cow ?

Daisies grow again,

Kingcups blow again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow

Robin came behind me,

Kiss'd me well I vow ;

Cuff him could I ? with my hands

Milking the cow ?

Swallows fly again,

Cuckoos cry again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,

Come and kiss me now ;

Help it can I ? with my hands

Milking the cow ?

Ringdoves coo again,

All things woo again.

Come behind and kiss me milking the cow !

Elizabeth. Right honest and red-
cheek'd ; Robin was violent,

And she was crafty — a sweet vio-
lence,

And a sweet craft. I would I were a
milkmaid,

To sing, love, marry, churn, brew,
bake, and die,

Then have my simple headstone by
the church,

And all things lived and ended hon-
estly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's
daughter :

Gardiner would have my head. They
are not sweet,

The violence and the craft that do
divide

The world of nature ; what is weak
must lie ;

The lion needs but roar to guard his
young ;

The lapwing lies, says " here " when
they are there.

Threaten the child; "I'll scourge you
if you did it:"
What weapon hath the child, save his
soft tongue,
To say "I did not?" and my rod's the
block.
I never lay my head upon the pillow
But that I think, "Wilt thou lie there
to-morrow?"
How oft the falling axe, that never
fell,
Hath shock'd me back into the day-
light truth
That it may fall to-day! Those
damp, black, dead
Nights in the Tower; dead—with the
fear of death
Too dead ev'n for a death-watch!
Toll of a bell,
Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a
rat
Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
For there was life—And there was
life in death—
The little murder'd princes, in a pale
light,
Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,
"come away!"
The civil wars are gone for ever-
more:
Thou last of all the Tudors, come
away!
With us is peace!" The last? It
was a dream;
I must not dream, not wink, but watch.
She has gone,
Maid Marian to her Robin—by and
by
Both happy! a fox may filch a hen by
night,
And make a morning outcry in the
yard;
But there's no Renard here to "catch
her tripping."
Catch me who can; yet, sometime I
have wish'd
That I were caught, and kill'd away
at once
Out of the flutter. The gray rogue,
Gardiner,
Went on his knees, and pray'd me to
confess
In Wyatt's business, and to cast my-
self
Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay,
when, my Lord?
God save the Queen! My jailor—

Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

Bedingfield. One, whose bolts,
That jail you from free life, bar you
from death.
There haunt some Papist ruffians
here about
Would murder you.

Elizabeth. I thank you heartily, sir,
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,
And God hath blest or cursed me with
a nose—

Your boots are from the horses.
Bedingfield. Ay, my Lady.
When next there comes a missive
from the Queen
It shall be all my study for one hour
To rose and lavender my horsiness,
Before I dare to glance upon your
Grace.

Elizabeth. A missive from the
Queen: last time she wrote,
I had like to have lost my life: it
takes my breath:
O God, sir, do you look upon your
boots,
Are you so small a man? Help me:
what think you,
Is it life or death?

Bedingfield. I thought not on my
boots;
The devil take all boots were ever
made
Since man went barefoot. See, I lay
it here,
For I will come no nearer to your
Grace;

[*Laying down the letter.*
And, whether it bring you bitter news
or sweet,
And God hath given your grace a
nose, or not,
I'll help you, if I may.

Elizabeth. Your pardon, then;
It is the heat and narrowness of the
cage
That makes the captive testy; with
free wing
The world were all one Araby. Leave
me now,
Will you, companion to myself, sir?
Bedingfield. Will I?
With most exceeding willingness, I
will;
You know I never come till I be call'd.

[*Exit.*
Elizabeth. It lies there folded: is
there venom in it?
A snake—and if I touch it, it may
sting.
Come, come, the worst!
Best wisdom is to know the worst at
once. [*Reads:*

"It is the King's wish, that
you should wed Prince Philibert of
Savoy. You are to come to Court on
the instant; and think of this in your
coming.

"MARY THE QUEEN."

Think! I have many thoughts;
I think there may be birdlime here for
me;

I think they fain would have me from
the realm;
I think the Queen may never bear a
child;
I think that I may be some time the
Queen,
Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince
or priest
Should fill my throne, myself upon
the steps.
I think I will not marry anyone,
Specially not this landless Philibert
Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,
I think that I will play with Phil-
ibert,—
As once the Holy Father did with
mine,
Before my father married my good
mother,—
For fear of Spain.

Enter LADY.

Lady. O Lord! your Grace, your
Grace,
I feel so happy: it seems that we shall
fly
These bald, blank fields, and dance
into the sun
That shines on princes.
Elizabeth. Yet, a moment since,
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing
here,
To kiss and cuff among the birds and
flowers—
A right rough life and healthful.

Lady. But the wench
Hath her own troubles; she is weep-
ing now;
For the wrong Robin took her at her
word.
Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk
was spilt.

Your highness such a milkmaid?
Elizabeth. I had kept
My Robins and my cows in sweeter
order
Had I been such.

Lady (stily). And had your Grace
a Robin?

Elizabeth. Come, come, you are
chill here; you want the sun
That shines at court; make ready for
the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.
Ready at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—LONDON. A ROOM IN
THE PALACE.

LORD PETRÉ and LORD WILLIAM
HOWARD.

Petré. You cannot see the Queen.
Renard denied her,
Ev'n now to me.

Howard. Their Flemish go-between
And all-in-all. I came to thank her
Majesty

For freeing my friend Bagenhall
from the Tower;

A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-
grace,

Flowers now but seldom.

Petré. Only now perhaps.
Because the Queen hath been three
days in tears

For Philip's going—like the wild
hedge-rose

Of a soft winter, possible, not prob-
able,

However you have prov'n it.

Howard. I must see her.

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My Lords, you cannot see
her Majesty.

Howard. Why then the King! for
I would have him bring it
Home to the leisure wisdom of his
Queen,

Before he go, that since these statutes
past,

Gardiner out-Gardiniers Gardiner in
his heat,

Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own
self—

Beast!—but they play with fire as
children do,

And burn the house. I know that
these are breeding

A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in
men

Against the King, the Queen, the
Holy Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him?
Renard. Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire

from her,
Not hope to melt her. I will give
your message.

[*Exeunt Petré and Howard.*]

Enter PHILIP (musing).

Philip. She will not have Prince
Philibert of Savoy,

I talk'd with her in vain—says she
will live

And die true maid—a goodly crea-
ture too.

Would *she* had been the Queen! yet
she must have him;

She troubles England: that she
breathes in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth
That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard!—
This Howard, whom they fear, what
was he saying?

Renard. What your imperial father
said, my liege,
To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardi-
ner burns,
And Bonner burns; and it would seem
this people
Care more for our brief life in their
wet land,
Than yours in happier Spain. I told
my Lord
He should not vex her Highness; she
would say
These are the means God works with,
that His church
May flourish.

Philip. Ay, sir, but in statesmanship
To strike too soon is oft to miss the
blow.

Thou knowest I bade my chaplain,
Castro, preach
Against these burnings.

Renard. And the Emperor
Approved you, and when last he wrote,
declared
His comfort in your Grace that you
were bland.

And affable to men of all estates,
In hope to charm them from their
hate of Spain.

Philip. In hope to crush all heresy
under Spain.

But, Renard, I am sicker staying here
Than any sea could make me passing
hence,

Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.
So sick am I with biding for this
child.

Is it the fashion in this clime for
women

To go twelve months in bearing of a
child?

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped,
they led

Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd
their bells,

Shot off their lying cannon, and her
priests

Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair
prince to come;

Till, by St. James, I find myself the
fool.

Why do you lift your eyebrow at me
thus?

Renard. I never saw your Highness
moved till now.

Philip. So weary am I of this wet
land of theirs,
And every soul of man that breathes
therein.

Renard. My liege, we must not
drop the mask before
The masquerade is over—

Philip. — Have I dropt it?
I have but shown a loathing face to
you,

Who knew it from the first.

Enter MARY.

Mary (aside). With Renard. Still
Parleying with Renard, all the day
with Renard,

And scarce a greeting all the day for
me—

And goes to-morrow. [*Exit Mary.*

*Philip (to Renard, who advances to
him).* Well, sir, is there more?

Renard (who has perceived the Queen).
May Simon Renard speak a
single word?

Philip. Ay.

Renard. And be forgiven for it?

Philip. Simon Renard
Knows me too well to speak a single
word

That could not be forgiven.

Renard. Well, my liege,
Your Grace hath a most chaste and
loving wife.

Philip. Why not? The Queen of
Philip should be chaste.

Renard. Ay, but, my Lord, you
know what Virgil sings,
Woman is various and most mutable.

Philip. She play the harlot! never.

Renard. No, sire, no,
Not dream'd of by the rabidest gos-
peller.

There was a paper thrown into the
palace,

"The King hath wearied of his bar-
ren bride."

She came upon it, read it, and then rent
it,

With all the rage of one who hates a
truth

He cannot but allow. Sire, I would
have you—

What should I say, I cannot pick my
words—

Be somewhat less—majestic to your
Queen.

Philip. Am I to change my man-
ners, Simon Renard,

Because these islanders are brutal
beasts?

Or would you have me turn a son-
neteer,

And warble those brief-sighted eyes
of hers?

Renard. Brief-sighted tho' they be,
I have seen them, sire,

When you perchance were trifling
royally

With some fair dame of court, sud-
denly fill

With such fierce fire—had it been
fire indeed

It would have burnt both speakers.

Philip. Ay, and then?

Renard. Sire, might it not be policy
in some matter

Of small importance now and then to
cede

A point to her demand ?

Philip. Well, I am going.

Renard. For should her love when
you are gone, my liege,

Witness these papers, there will not
be wanting

Those that will urge her injury —
should her love —

And I have known such women more
than one —

Veer to the counterpoint, and jeal-
ousy

Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse
Almost into one metal love and hate, —

And she impress her wrongs upon her
Council,

And these again upon her Parlia-
ment —

We are not loved here, and would be
then perhaps

Not so well holpen in our wars with
France,

As else we might be — here she comes.

Enter MARY.

Mary. . . . O Philip !
Nay, must you go indeed ?

Philip. Madam, I must.

Mary. The parting of a husband
and a wife

Is like the cleaving of a heart ; one half
Will flutter here, one there.

Philip. You say true, Madam.

Mary. The Holy Virgin will not
have me yet

Lose the sweet hope that I may bear
a prince.

If such a prince were born and you
not here !

Philip. I should be here if such a
prince were born.

Mary. But must you go ?

Philip. Madam, you know my fa-
ther,

Retiring into cloistral solitude

To yield the remnant of his years to
heaven,

Will shift the yoke and weight of all
the world

From off his neck to mine. We meet
at Brussels.

But since mine absence will not be for
long,

Your Majesty shall go to Dover with
me,

And wait my coming back.

Mary. To Dover ? no,
I am too feeble. I will go to Green-
wich,

So you will have me with you ; and
there watch

All that is gracious in the breath of
heaven

Draw with your sails from our poor
land, and pass

And leave me, Philip, with my prayers
for you.

Philip. And doubtless I shall profit
by your prayers.

Mary. Methinks that would you
tarry one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould
myself

To bear your going better ; will you
do it ?

Philip. Madam, a day may sink or
save a realm.

Mary. A day may save a heart
from breaking too.

Philip. Well, Simon Renard, shall
we stop a day ?

Renard. Your Grace's business will
not suffer, sire,

For one day more, so far as I can tell.

Philip. Then one day more to please
her Majesty.

Mary. The sunshine sweeps across
my life again.

O if I knew you felt this parting,
Philip,

As I do !

Philip. By St. James I do protest,
Upon the faith and honor of a Span-
iard,

I am vastly grieved to leave your
Majesty.

Simon, is supper ready ?

Renard. Ay, my liege,
I saw the covers laying.

Philip. Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

Mary. What have you there ?

Pole. So please your Majesty,
A long petition from the foreign
exiles

To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop
Thirlby,

And my Lord Paget and Lord Wil-
liam Howard,

Crave, in the same cause, hearing of
your Grace.

Hath he not written himself — in-
fatuated —

To sue you for his life ?

Mary. His life ? Oh, no ;
Not sued for that — he knows it were
in vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me
not to sully

Mine own prerogative, and degrade
the realm

By seeking justice at a stranger's
hand
Against my natural subject. King
and Queen,
To whom he owes his loyalty after
God,
Shall these accuse him to a foreign
prince?
Death would not grieve him more. I
cannot be
True to this realm of England and
the Pope
Together, says the heretic.

Pole. And there errs;
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.
A secular kingdom is but as the body
Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast.
The Holy Father in a secular kingdom
Is as the soul descending out of
heaven
Into a body generate.

Mary. Write to him, then.

Pole. I will.

Mary. And sharply, Pole.

Pole. Here come the Cranmerites!

Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD
WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Health to your Grace!
Good morrow, my Lord Cardi-
nal;

We make our humble prayer unto
your Grace
That Cranmer may withdraw to
foreign parts,
Or into private life within the realm.
In several bills and declarations,
Madam,

He hath recanted all his heresies.

Paget. Ay, ay; if Bonner have not
forged the bills. [*Aside.*

Mary. Did not More die, and
Fisher? he must burn.

Howard. He hath recanted, Madam.

Mary. The better for him.
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

Howard. Ay, ay, your Grace; but
it was never seen
That any one recanting thus at full,
As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on
earth.

Mary. It will be seen now, then.

Thirlby. O Madam, Madam!

I thus implore you, low upon my
knees,
To reach the hand of mercy to my
friend.

I have err'd with him; with him I have
recanted.

What human reason is there why my
friend

Should meet with lesser mercy than
myself?

Mary. My Lord of Ely, this. After
a riot

We hang the leaders, let their follow-
ing go.

Cranmer is head and father of these
heresies,

New learning as they call it; yea, may
God

Forget me at most need when I for-
get

Her foul divorce — my sainted mother
— No! —

Howard. Ay, ay, but mighty doctors
doubted there.

The Pope himself waver'd; and more
than one

Row'd in that galley — Gardiner to
wit,

Whom truly I deny not to have been
Your faithful friend and trusty coun-
cillor.

Hath not your Highness ever read his
book,

His tractate upon True Obedience,
Writ by himself and Bonner?

Mary. I will take

Such order with all bad, heretical
books

That none shall hold them in his
house and live,

Henceforward. No, my Lord.

Howard. Then never read it.
The truth is here. Your father was
a man

Of such colossal kinghood, yet so
courteous,

Except when wroth, you scarce could
meet his eye

And hold your own; and were he
wroth indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say,
Your father had a will that beat men

down;

Your father had a brain that beat
men down —

Pole. Not me, my Lord.

Howard. No, for you were not
here;

You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's
throne;

And it would more become you, my
Lord Legate,

To join a voice, so potent with her
Highness,

To ours in plea for Cranmer than to
stand

On naked self-assertion.

Mary. All your voices
Are waves on flint. The heretic must
burn.

Howard. Yet once he saved your
Majesty's own life;

Stood out against the King in your
behalf,

At his own peril.

Mary. I know not if he did;
And if he did I care not, my Lord

Howard.

My life is not so happy, no such boon,
That I should spare to take a heretic priest's,
Who saved it or not saved. Why do you vex me?

Paget. Yet to save Cranmer were to serve the Church,
Your Majesty's I mean; he is effaced,
Self-blotted out; so wounded in his honor,
He can but creep down into some dark hole

Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and die;
But if you burn him,—well, your Highness knows
The saying, "Martyr's blood—seed of the Church."

Mary. Of the true Church; but his is none, nor will be.
You are too politic for me, my Lord *Paget.*

And if he have to live so loath'd a life,
It were more merciful to burn him now.

Thirlby. O yet relent. O, Madam, if you knew him
As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,
With all his learning—

Mary. Yet a heretic still.
His learning makes his burning the more just.

Thirlby. So worship't of all those that came across him;
The stranger at his hearth, and all his house—

Mary. His children and his concubine, belike.

Thirlby. To do him any wrong was to beget
A kindness from him, for his heart was rich,
Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd therein

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Charity.

Pole. "After his kind it costs him nothing," there's
An old world English adage to the point.

These are but natural graces, my good Bishop,
Which in the Catholic garden are as flowers,

But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.

Howard. Such weeds make dunghills gracious.

Mary. Enough, my Lords.
It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,
And Philip's will, and mine, that he should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

Howard. Farewell, Madam,
God grant you ampler mercy at your call

Than you have shown to Cranmer.

[*Exeunt* Lords.
Pole. After this,
Your Grace will hardly care to overlook

This same petition of the foreign exiles
For Cranmer's life.

Mary. Make out the writ to-night.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—OXFORD. CRANMER IN PRISON.

Cranmer. Last night, I dream'd the faggots were alight,
And that myself was fasten'd to the stake,
And found it all a visionary flame,
Cool as the light in old decaying wood;
And then King Harry look'd from out a cloud,
And bade me have good courage; and I heard
An angel cry "There is more joy in Heaven,"—
And after that, the trumpet of the dead.

[*Trumpets without.*
Why, there are trumpets blowing now: what is it?

Enter FATHER COLE.

Cole. Cranmer, I come to question you again;
Have you remain'd in the true Catholic faith
I left you in?

Cranmer. In the true Catholic faith,
By Heaven's grace, I am more and more confirm'd.
Why are the trumpets blowing, Father *Cole*?

Cole. Cranmer, it is decided by the Council
That you to-day should read your recantation
Before the people in St. Mary's Church.

And there be many heretics in the town,
Who loathe you for your late return to Rome,
And might assail you passing through the street,
And tear you piecemeal: so you have a guard.

Cranmer. Or seek to rescue me. I thank the Council.

Cole. Do you lack any money?

Cranmer. Nay, why should I? The prison fare is good enough for me.

Cole. Ay, but to give the poor.

Cranmer. Hand it me, then!
I thank you.

Cole. For a little space, farewell;
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.
[*Exit Cole.*]

Cranmer. It is against all precedent to burn
One who recants; they mean to pardon me.
To give the poor — they give the poor who die.
Well, burn me or not burn me I am fixt;
It is but a communion, not a mass:
A holy supper, not a sacrifice;
No man can make his Maker — *Villa Garcia.*

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. Pray you write out this paper for me, *Cranmer.*

Cranmer. Have I not writ enough to satisfy you?

Villa Garcia. It is the last.

Cranmer. Give it me, then.
[*He writes.*]

Villa Garcia. Now sign.

Cranmer. I have sign'd enough, and I will sign no more.

Villa Garcia. It is no more than what you have sign'd already, The public form thereof.

Cranmer. It may be so;
I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

Villa Garcia. But this is idle of you. Well, sir, well,

You are to beg the people to pray for you;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life;

Declare the Queen's right to the throne; confess

Your faith before all hearers; and retract

That Eucharistic doctrine in your book.

Will you not sign it now?

Cranmer. No, *Villa Garcia,* I sign no more. Will they have mercy on me?

Villa Garcia. Have you good hopes of mercy! So farewell. [*Exit.*]

Cranmer. Good hopes, not theirs, have I that I am fixt,

Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange hours,

After the long brain-dazing colloquies,
And thousand-times recurring argument

Of those two friars ever in my prison,
When left alone in my despondency,
Without a friend, a book, my faith would seem

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam heavily

Against the huge corruptions of the Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough
To scare me into dreaming, "what am I,

Cranmer, against whole ages?" was it so,

Or am I slandering my most inward friend,

To veil the fault of my most outward foe —

The soft and tremulous coward in the flesh?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,
I have found thee and not leave thee any more.

It is but a communion, not a mass —
No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!

(*Writes.*) So, so; this will I say —
thus will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*]

Enter BONNER.

Bonner. Good day, old friend; what, you look somewhat worn;

And yet it is a day to test your health
Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken

with you
Since when? — your degradation. At your trial

Never stood up a bolder man than you;

You would not cap the Pope's commissioner —

Your learning, and your stoutness, and your heresy,

Dumbfounded half of us. So, after that,

We had to dis-archbishop and unlord,
And make you simple *Cranmer* once again.

The common barber clipt your hair, and I

Scraped from your finger-points the holy oil;

And worse than all, you had to kneel to me;

Which was not pleasant for you, Master *Cranmer.*

Now you, that would not recognize the Pope,

And you, that would not own the Real Presence,

Have found a real presence in the stake,

Which frights you back into the ancient faith;

And so you have recanted to the Pope.
How are the mighty fallen, Master *Cranmer!*

Cranmer. You have been more fierce against the Pope than I;

But why fling back the stone he strikes me with? [*Aside.*]

O *Bonner,* if I ever did you kindness —
Power hath been given you to try faith by fire —

Pray you, remembering how yourself
have changed,
Be somewhat pitiful, after I have
gone,
To the poor flock — to women and to
children —
That when I was archbishop held with
me.

Bonner. Ay — gentle as they call
you — live or die!
Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?
I must obey the Queen and Council,
man.

Win thro' this day with honor to your-
self,
And I'll say something for you — so
— good-bye. [*Exit.*]

Cranmer. This hard coarse man of
old hath crouch'd to me
Till I myself was half ashamed for
him.

Enter THIRLBY.

Weep not, good Thirlby.

Thirlby. Oh, my Lord, my Lord!
My heart is no such block as Bonner's
is:

Who would not weep?

Cranmer. Why do you so my-lord
me,

Who am disgraced?

Thirlby. On earth; but saved in
heaven

By your recanting.

Cranmer. Will they burn me,
Thirlby?

Thirlby. Alas, they will; these
burnings will not help

The purpose of the faith; but my poor
voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar
Of a spring-tide.

Cranmer. And they will surely
burn me?

Thirlby. Ay; and besides, will have
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears
Of all men, to the saving of their
souls,

Before your execution. May God
help you

Thro' that hard hour!

Cranmer. And may God bless you,
Thirlby!

Well, they shall hear my recantation
there. [*Exit Thirlby.*]

Disgraced, dishonor'd! — not by them,
indeed,

By mine own self — by mine own
hand!

O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,
'twas you

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan
of Kent;

But then she was a witch. You have
written much,

But you were never raised to plead
for Frith,

Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he
was deliver'd

To the secular arm to burn; and there
was Lambert;

Who can foresee himself? truly these
burnings,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the
burners,

And help the other side. You shall
burn too,

Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire — inch by inch to die in agony!
Latimer

Had a brief end — not Ridley.
Hooper burn'd

Three-quarters of an hour. Will my
faggots

Be wet as his were? It is a day of
rain.

I will not muse upon it.

My fancy takes the burner's part, and
makes

The fire seem even crueller than it
is.

No, I not doubt that God will give
me strength,

Albeit I have denied him.

Enter SOTO and VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. We are ready
To take you to St. Mary's, Master
Cranmer.

Cranmer. And I: lead on; ye loose
me from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

*COLE in the Pulpit, LORD WILLIAMS
OF THAME presiding. LORD WIL-
LIAM HOWARD, LORD PAGET, and
others. CRANMER enters between
SOTO and VILLA GARCIA, and the
whole Choir strike up "Nunc Dimit-
tis." CRANMER is set upon a Scaf-
fold before the people.*

Cole. Behold him —

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*
People. Oh, unhappy sight!

First Protestant. See how the tears
run down his fatherly face.

Second Protestant. James, didst thou
ever see a carrion crow

Stand watching a sick beast before he
dies?

First Protestant. Him perch'd up
there? I wish some thunder-
bolt

Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit
and all.

Cole. Behold him, brethren: he
hath cause to weep! —

So have we all: weep with him if ye will,

Yet —

It is expedient for one man to die,
Yea, for the people, lest the people die.

Yet wherefore should he die that hath return'd

To the one Catholic Universal Church,
Repentant of his errors?

Protestant murmurs. Ay, tell us that.

Cole. Those of the wrong side will despise the man,
Deeming him one that thro' the fear of death

Gave up his cause, except he seal his faith

In sight of all with flaming martyrdom.

Cranmer. Ay.

Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there may seem

According to the canons pardon due
To him that so repents, yet are there causes

Wherefore our Queen and Council at this time

Adjudge him to the death. He hath been a traitor,

A shaker and confounder of the realm;

And when the King's divorce was sued at Rome,

He here, this heretic metropolitan,
As if he had been the Holy Father, sat

And judged it. Did I call him heretic?

A huge heresiarch! never was it known

That any man so writing, preaching so,

So poisoning the Church, so long continuing,

Hath found his pardon; therefore he must die,

For warning and example.

Other reasons
There be for this man's ending, which our Queen

And Council at this present deem it not

Expedient to be known.

Protestant murmurs. I warrant you.

Cole. Take therefore, all, example by this man,

For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,
Much less shall others in like cause escape,

That all of you, the highest as the lowest,

May learn there is no power against the Lord.

There stands a man, once of so high degree,

Chief prelate of our Church, archbishop, first

In Council, second person in the realm,

Friend for so long time of a mighty King;

And now ye see downfallen and debased

From councillor to caitiff — fallen so low,

The leprous flutterings of the byway, scum

And offal of the city would not change

Estates with him; in brief, so miserable,

There is no hope of better left for him,
No place for worse.

Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad.
This is the work of God. He is glorified

In thy conversion: lo! thou art reclaim'd;

He brings thee home: nor fear but that to-day

Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's award,

And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.

Remember how God made the fierce fire seem

To those three children like a pleasant dew.

Remember, too,

The triumph of St. Andrew on his cross,

The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.

Thus, if thou call on God and all the saints,

God will beat down the fury of the flame,

Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.

And for thy soul shall masses here be sung

By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.

Cranmer. Ay, one and all, dear brothers, pray for me;

Pray with one breath, one heart, one soul for me.

Cole. And now, lest anyone among you doubt

The man's conversion and remorse of heart,

Yourselves shall hear him speak.

Speak, Master Cranmer,

Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim

Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

Cranmer. And that I will. O God, Father of Heaven!

O Son of God, Redeemer of the world!

O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them
 both,
 Three persons and one God, have
 mercy on me,
 Most miserable sinner, wretched man.
 I have offended against heaven and
 earth
 More grievously than any tongue can
 tell.
 Then whither should I flee for any
 help?
 I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,
 And I can find no refuge upon earth.
 Shall I despair then? — God forbid!
 O God,
 For thou art merciful, refusing none
 That come to Thee for succor, unto
 Thee,
 Therefore, I come; humble myself to
 Thee;
 Saying, O Lord God, although my sins
 be great,
 For thy great mercy have mercy! O
 God the Son,
 Not for slight faults alone, when thou
 becamest
 Man in the Flesh, was the great mys-
 tery wrought;
 O God the Father, not for little sins
 Didst thou yield up thy Son to human
 death;
 But for the greatest sin that can be
 sinn'd,
 Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,
 Unpardonable, — sin against the light,
 The truth of God, which I had proven
 and known.
 Thy mercy must be greater than all
 sin.
 Forgive me, Father, for no merit of
 mine,
 But that Thy name by man be glori-
 fied,
 And Thy most blessed Son's, who died
 for man.
 Good people, every man at time of
 death
 Would fain set forth some saying that
 may live
 After his death and better humankind;
 For death gives life's last word a
 power to live,
 And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain
 After the vanish'd voice, and speak
 to men.
 God grant me grace to glorify my God!
 And first I say it is a grievous case,
 Many so dote upon this bubble world,
 Whose colors in a moment break and
 fly,
 They care for nothing else. What
 saith St. John: —
 "Love of this world is hatred against
 God."
 Again, I pray you all that, next to God,
 You do unmurmuringly and willingly

Obey your King and Queen, and not
 for dread
 Of these alone, but from the fear of
 Him
 Whose ministers they be to govern
 you.
 Thirdly, I pray you all to live together
 Like brethren; yet what hatred
 Christian men
 Bear to each other, seeming not as
 brethren,
 But mortal foes! But do you good to
 all
 As much as in you lieth. Hurt no
 man more
 Than you would harm your loving
 natural brother
 Of the same roof, same breast. If any
 do,
 Albeit he think himself at home with
 God,
 Of this be sure, he is whole worlds
 away.
Protestant murmurs. What sort of
 brothers then be those that lust
 To burn each other?
Williams. Peace be among you,
 there!
Cranmer. Fourthly, to those that
 own exceeding wealth,
 Remember that sore saying spoken
 once
 By Him that was the truth, "How
 hard it is
 For the rich man to enter into
 Heaven;"
 Let all rich men remember that hard
 word.
 I have not time for more: if ever,
 now
 Let them flow forth in charity, seeing
 now
 The poor so many, and all food so
 dear.
 Long have I lain in prison, yet have
 heard
 Of all their wretchedness. Give to
 the poor,
 Ye give to God. He is with us in the
 poor.
 And now, forasmuch as I have
 come
 To the last end of life, and thereupon
 Hangs all my past, and all my life to
 be,
 Either to live with Christ in Heaven
 with joy,
 Or to be still in pain with devils in
 hell;
 And, seeing in a moment, I shall find
 [Pointing upwards.
 Heaven or else hell ready to swallow
 me, [Pointing downwards.
 I shall declare to you my very faith
 Without all color.
Cole. Hear him, my good brethren.

Cranmer. I do believe in God, Father of all ;

In every article of the Catholic faith,
And every syllable taught us by our Lord,

His prophets, and apostles, in the Testaments,
Both Old and New.

Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

Cranmer. And now I come to the great cause that weighs
Upon my conscience more than any-thing

Or said or done in all my life by me ;
For there be writings I have set abroad
Against the truth I knew within my heart,

Written for fear of death, to save my life,

If that might be ; the papers by my hand

Sign'd since my degradation — by this hand

[*Holding out his right hand.*

Written and sign'd — I here renounce them all ;

And, since my hand offended, having written

Against my heart, my hand shall first be burnt.

So I may come to the fire.

[*Dead silence.*

Protestant murmurs.

First Protestant. I knew it would be so.

Second Protestant. Our prayers are heard !

Third Protestant. God bless him !

Catholic murmurs. Out upon him !
out upon him !

Liar ! dissembler ! traitor ! to the fire !

Williams (raising his voice). You know that you recanted all you said

Touching the sacrament in that same book

You wrote against my Lord of Winchester ;

Dissemble not ; play the plain Christian man.

Cranmer. Alas, my Lord,

I have been a man loved plainness all my life ;

I *did* dissemble, but the hour has come
For utter truth and plainness ; wherefore, I say,

I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover,
As for the Pope I count him Anti-christ,

With all his devil's doctrines ; and refuse,

Reject him, and abhor him. I have said.

[*Cries on all sides,*
"Pull him down ! Away with him !"

Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth !
Hale him away !

Williams. Harm him not, harm him not ! have him to the fire !

[*CRANMER goes out between Two Friars, smiling; hands are reached to him from the crowd.* LORD WILLIAM HOWARD and LORD PAGET are left alone in the church.

Paget. The nave and aisles all empty as a fool's jest !

No, here's Lord William Howard.

What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning ?

Howard. Fie !

To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,

And watch a good man burn. Never again.

I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.

Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would not, For the pure honor of our common nature,

Hear what I might — another recantation

Of Cranmer at the stake.

Paget. You'd not hear that.

He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd upright ;

His eye was like a soldier's, whom the general

He looks to and he leans on as his God,

Hath rated for some backwardness and bidd'n him

Charge one against a thousand, and the man

Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes and dies.

Howard. Yet that he might not after all those papers

Of recantation yield again, who knows ?

Paget. Papers of recantation !
Think you then

That Cranmer read all papers that he sign'd ?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he sign'd ?

Nay, I trow not: and you shall see, my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another

Will in some lying fashion misreport His ending to the glory of their

• church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die ? Latimer was eighty, was he not ? his

best

Of life was over then.

Howard. His eighty years

Look'd somewhat crooked on him in his frieze ;

But after they had stript him to his shroud,

He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
 And gather'd with his hands the start-
 ing flame,
 And wash'd his hands and all his face
 therein,
 Until the powder suddenly blew him
 dead.
 Ridley was longer burning; but he
 died
 As manfully and boldly, and, 'fore
 God,
 I know them heretics, but right Eng-
 lish ones.
 If ever, as heaven grant, we clash
 with Spain,
 Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-
 sailors
 Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole
 Will tell you that the devil helpt them
 thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the distance.*]

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs
 howl and bay him!

Howard. Might it not be the other
 side rejoicing

In his brave end?

Paget. They are too crush'd, too
 broken,
 They can but weep in silence.

Howard. Ay, ay, *Paget*,
 They have brought it in large measure
 on themselves.

Have I not heard them mock the
 blessed Host

In songs so lewd, the beast might roar
 his claim

To being in God's image, more than
 they?

Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the
 groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the par-
 son's place,

The parson from his own spire swung
 out dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets,
 and all men

Regarding her? I say they have
 drawn the fire

On their own heads: yet, *Paget*, I do
 hold

The Catholic, if he have the greater
 right,

Hath been the crueller.

Paget. Action and re-action,
 The miserable see-saw of our child-
 world,

Make us despise it at odd hours, my
 Lord.

Heaven help that this re-action not
 re-act

Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,
 So that she come to rule us.

Howard. The world's mad.

Paget. My Lord, the world is like
 a drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end
 —but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the
 left,

Push'd by the crowd beside—and
 underfoot

An earthquake; for since Henry for
 a doubt—

Which a young lust had clapt upon
 the back,

Crying, "Forward!"—set our old
 church rocking, men

Have hardly known what to believe,
 or whether

They should believe in anything; the
 currents

So shift and change, they see not
 how they are borne,

Nor whither. I conclude the King a
 beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world
 A most obedient beast and fool—

myself

Half beast and fool as appertaining
 to it;

Altho' your Lordship hath as little of
 each

Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
 As may be consonant with mortality.

Howard. We talk and Cranmer
 suffers.

The kindest man I ever knew; see,
 see,

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy
 land!

Hard-natured Queen, half-Spanish in
 herself,

And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock
 of Spain—

Her life, since Philip left her, and she
 lost

Her fierce desire of bearing him a
 child,

Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's
 day,

Gone narrowing down and darkening
 to a close.

There will be more conspiracies, I
 fear.

Paget. Ay, ay, beware of France.

Howard. O *Paget*, *Paget*!
 I have seen heretics of the poorer
 sort,

Expectant of the rack from day to
 day,

To whom the fire were welcome, lying
 chain'd

In breathless dungeons over steaming
 sewers,

Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon
 the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,
 Until they died of rotted limbs; and

then

Cast on the dunghill naked, and
become
Hideously alive again from head to
heel,
Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel
vomit

With hate and horror.

Paget. Nay, you sicken *me*
To hear you.

Howard. Fancy-sick; these things
are done,
Done right against the promise of this
Queen

Twice given.

Paget. No faith with heretics, my
Lord!

Hist! there be two old gossips — gos-
pellers,

I take it; stand behind the pillar here;
I warrant you they talk about the
burning.

*Enter TWO OLD WOMEN. JOAN, and
after her TIB.*

Joan. Why, it be Tib!

Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the wind
and the wet! What a day, what a
day! nigh upo' judgement daay loike.
Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but
they wunt set i' the Lord's cheer o'
that daay.

Joan. I must set down myself, Tib;
it be a var waay vor my owld legs up
vro' Islip. Eh, my rheumatizy be that
bad howiver be I to win to the burnin'.

Tib. I should saay 'twur ower by
now. P'd ha' been here avore, but
Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and
Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's butter's as
good 'z hern.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be bet-
ter.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi'
me, Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld
man.

Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man
wur up and awaay betimes wi' drie
hard eggs for a good plecte at the
burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge
'ud ha' been a-harrowin' o' white
peasen i' the outfield — and barrin'
the wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the
wind, so 'z we was forced to stick her,
but we fetched her round at last.
Thank the Lord therevore. Dumble's
the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps

and vires be bad things; tell 'ee now,
I heerd summat as summun towld
summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's
end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to
dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a
couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had
to bide howsomiver, vor "I wunt
dine," says my Lord Bishop, says he,
"not till I hears ez Latimer and Rid-
ley be a-vire;" and so they bided on
and on till vour o' the clock, till his
man cum in post vro' here, and tells
un ez the vire has tuk holt. "Now,"
says the Bishop, says he, "we'll gwo
to dinner;" and the owld lord fell to
's meat wi' a will, God bless un! but
Gardiner wur struck down like by the
hand o' God avore a could taste a
mossel, and a set un all a-vire, so 'z
the tongue on un cum a-lolluping out
o' 's mouth as black as a rat. Thank
the Lord, therevore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary
gwoes on a-burnin' and a-burnin', to
get her baaby born; but all her burn-
ins' 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy
that makes the water in her. There's
nought but the vire of God's hell ez
can burn out that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therevore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. A-burnin' and a-burnin', and
a-makin' o' volk madder and madder;
but tek thou my word vor't, Joan, —
and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten
year — the burnin' o' the owld arch-
bishop 'll burn the Pwoap out o' this
'ere land vor iver and iver.

Howard. Out of the church, you
brace of cursed crones,
Or I will have you duck'd! (*Women
hurry out.*) Said I not right?
For how should reverend prelate or
throned prince

Brook for an hour such brute malig-
nity?

Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther
brew'd!

Paget. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor
garrulous country-wives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side
with you;

You cannot judge the liquor from the
lees.

Howard. I think that in some sort
we may. But see,

Enter PETERS.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest
Catholic,

Who follow'd with the crowd to Cran-
mer's fire.

One that would neither misreport nor
lie,

Not to gain paradise : no, nor if the
Pope,
Charged him to do it — he is white as
death.

Peters, how pale you look ! you bring
the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you,
Peters. Twice or thrice
The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt
me round.

Howard. Peters, you know me
Catholic, but English.
Did he die bravely ? Tell me that, or
leave

All else untold.

Peters. My Lord, he died most
bravely.

Howard. Then tell me all.

Paget. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

Peters. You saw him how he past
among the crowd ;

And ever as he walk'd the Spanish
friars

Still plied him with entreaty and re-
proach :

But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the
helm

Steers, ever looking to the happy ha-
ven

Where he shall rest at night, moved
to his death ;

And I could see that many silent
hands

Came from the crowd and met his
own ; and thus,

When we had come where Ridley
burnt with Latimer,

He, with a cheerful smile, as one
whose mind

Is all made up, in haste put off the
rags

They had mock'd his misery with, and
all in white,

His long white beard, which he had
never shaven

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping
to the chain

Wherewith they bound him to the
stake, he stood

More like an ancient father of the
Church,

Than heretic of these times ; and still
the friars

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook
his head,

Or answer'd them in smiling negatives ;
Whereat Lord Williams gave a sud-
den cry : —

" Make short ! make short ! " and so
they lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to
heaven,

And thrust his right into the bitter
flame ;

And crying, in his deep voice, more
than once,

" This hath offended — this unworthy
hand ! "

So held it till it all was burn'd, before
The flame had reach'd his body ; I
stood near —

Mark'd him — he never uttered moan
of pain :

He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like a
statue,

Unmoving in the greatness of the
flame,

Gave up the ghost ; and so past mar-
tyr-like —

Martyr I may not call him — past —
but whither ?

Paget. To purgatory, man, to pur-
gatory.

Peters. Nay, but, my Lord, he de-
nied purgatory.

Paget. Why then to heaven, and
God ha' mercy on him.

Howard. *Paget*, despite his fearful
heresies,

I loved the man, and needs must
moan for him ;

O Cranmer !

Paget. But your moan is useless
now :

Come out, my Lord, it is a world of
fools. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. — LONDON. HALL IN THE PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. Madam,

I do assure you, that it must be look'd
to :

Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes
Are scarce two hundred men, and the

French fleet

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be
look'd to,

If war should fall between yourself
and France ;

Or you will lose your Calais.

Mary. It shall be look'd to ;

I wish you a good morning, good Sir
Nicholas :

Here is the King. [*Exit Heath.*]

Enter PHILIP.

Philip. Sir Nicholas tells you true,
And you must look to Calais when I go.

Mary. Go ? must you go, indeed —
again — so soon ?

Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the
swallow,

That might live always in the sun's
warm heart,

Stays longer here in our poor north
than you : —

Knows where he nested — ever comes
again.

Philip. And, Madam, so shall I.

Mary. O, will you? will you?
I am faint with fear that you will
come no more.

Philip. Ay, ay; but many voices
call me hence.

Mary. Voices—I hear unhappy
rumors—nay,
I say not, I believe. What voices
call you
Dearer than mine that should be dear-
est to you?

Alas, my Lord! what voices and how
many?

Philip. The voices of Castile and
Aragon,
Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan,—
The voices of Franche-Comté, and the
Netherlands,
The voices of Peru and Mexico,
Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines,
And all the fair spice-islands of the
East.

Mary (*admiringly*). You are the
mightiest monarch upon earth,
I but a little Queen: and, so indeed,
Need you the more.

Philip. A little Queen! but when
I came to wed your Majesty, Lord
Howard,
Sending an insolent shot that dash'd
the seas

Upon us, made us lower our kingly flag
To yours of England.

Mary. Howard is all English!
There is no king, not were he ten times
king,

Ten times our husband, but must
lower his flag
To that of England in the seas of
England.

Philip. Is that your answer?

Mary. Being Queen of England,
I have none other.

Philip. So.

Mary. But wherefore not
Helm the huge vessel of your state,
my liege,
Here by the side of her who loves you
most?

Philip. No, Madam, no! a candle in
the sun
Is all but smoke—a star beside the
moon

Is all but lost; your people will not
crown me—

Your people are as cheerless as your
clime;

Hate me and mine: witness the brawls,
the gibbets.

Here swings a Spaniard—there an
Englishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-
plexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and re-
turn—

But now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help me?
They hate me also for my love to
you,

My Philip; and these judgments on
the land—

Harvestless autumns, horrible agues,
plague—

Philip. The blood and sweat of
heretics at the stake
Is God's best dew upon the barren field.
Burn more!

Mary. I will, I will; and you will
stay?

Philip. Have I not said? Madam,
I came to sue
Your Council and yourself to declare
war.

Mary. Sir, there are many English
in your ranks
To help your battle.

Philip. So far, good. I say
I came to sue your Council and your-
self

To declare war against the King of
France.

Mary. Not to see me?

Philip. Ay, Madam, to see you.
Unalterably and pesteringly fond!

[*Aside.*
But, soon or late you must have war
with France;

King Henry warms your traitors at
his hearth.

Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford
there.

Courtenay, belike—

Mary. A fool and featherhead!

Philip. Ay, but they use his name.
In brief, this Henry

Stirs up your land against you to the
intent

That you may lose your English her-
itage.

And then, your Scottish namesake
marrying

The Dauphin, he would weld France,
England, Scotland,

Into one sword to hack at Spain and
me.

Mary. And yet the Pope is now
colleagu'd with France;

You make your wars upon him down
in Italy:—

Philip, can that be well?

Philip. Content you, Madam;
You must abide my judgment, and
my father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy
war.

The Pope would cast the Spaniard
out of Naples:

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors,
Saracens.

The Pope has pushed his horns be-
yond his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now,
 Duke Alva will but touch him on the
 horns,
 And he withdraws; and of his holy
 head —
 For Alva is true son of the true
 church —
 No hair is harm'd. Will you not help
 me here ?

Mary. Alas! the Council will not
 hear of war.
 They say your wars are not the wars
 of England.
 They will not lay more taxes on a
 land
 So hunger-nipt and wretched; and
 you know
 The crown is poor. We have given
 the church-lands back:
 The nobles would not; nay, they clapt
 their hands
 Upon their swords when ask'd; and
 therefore God
 Is hard upon the people. What's to
 be done ?
 Sir, I will move them in your cause
 again,
 And we will raise us loans and subsidies
 Among the merchants; and Sir
 Thomas Gresham
 Will aid us. There is Antwerp and
 the Jews.

Philip. Madam, my thanks.

Mary. And you will stay your
 going ?

Philip. And further to discourage
 and lay lame
 The plots of France, altho' you love
 her not,
 You must proclaim Elizabeth your
 heir.
 She stands between you and the
 Queen of Scots.

Mary. The Queen of Scots at least
 is Catholic.

Philip. Ay, Madam, Catholic; but
 I will not have
 The King of France the King of Eng-
 land too.

Mary. But she's a heretic, and,
 when I am gone,
 Brings the new learning back.

Philip. It must be done.
 You must proclaim Elizabeth your
 heir.

Mary. Then it is done; but you will
 stay your going
 Somewhat beyond your settled pur-
 pose ?

Philip. No !

Mary. What, not one day ?

Philip. You beat upon the rock.

Mary. And I am broken there.

Philip. Is this a place
 To wait in, Madam ? what ! a public
 hall.

Go in, I pray you.

Mary. Do not seem so changed.
 Say go; but only say it lovingly.

Philip. You do mistake. I am not
 one to change.

I never loved you more.

Mary. Sire, I obey you.

Come quickly.

Philip. Ay. [*Exit Mary.*]

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

Feria (aside). The Queen in tears !

Philip. *Feria !*
 Hast thou not mark'd — come closer
 to mine ear —

How doubly aged this Queen of ours
 hath grown
 Since she lost hope of bearing us a
 child ?

Feria. Sire, if your Grace hath
 mark'd it, so have I.

Philip. Hast thou not likewise
 mark'd Elizabeth,
 How fair and royal — like a Queen,
 indeed ?

Feria. Allow me the same answer
 as before —

That if your Grace hath mark'd her,
 so have I.

Philip. Good, now; methinks my
 Queen is like enough
 To leave me by and by.

Feria. To leave you, sire ?

Philip. I mean not like to live.
 Elizabeth —

To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,
 We meant to wed her; but I am not
 sure

She will not serve me better — so my
 Queen

Would leave me — as — my wife.

Feria. Sire, even so.

Philip. She will not have Prince
 Philibert of Savoy.

Feria. No, sire.

Philip. I have to pray you,
 some odd time,

To sound the Princess carelessly on
 this;

Not as from me, but as your phantasy;
 And tell me how she takes it.

Feria. Sire, I will.

Philip. I am not certain but that
 Philibert

Shall be the man; and I shall urge
 his suit

Upon the Queen, because I am not
 certain:

You understand, *Feria.*

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. And if you be not secret
 in this matter,

You understand me there, too ?

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. You must be sweet and
 supple, like a Frenchman.

She is none of those who loathe the
honeycomb. *[Exit FERIA.]*

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My liege, I bring you
goodly tidings.

Philip. Well?

Renard. There will be war with
France, at last, my liege;
Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed
ass,
Sailing from France, with thirty Eng-
lishmen,
Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north of
York;
Proclaims himself protector, and af-
firms
The Queen has forfeited her right to
reign
By marriage with an alien—other
things
As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt
This buzz will soon be silenced; but
the Council
(I have talk'd with some already) are
for war.
This the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in
France;
They show their teeth upon it; and
your Grace,
So you will take advice of mine,
should stay
Yet for awhile, to shape and guide the
event.
Philip. Good! Renard, I will stay
then.
Renard. Also, sire,
Might I not say—to please your wife,
the Queen?
Philip. Ay, Renard, if you care to
put it so. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE
PALACE.

MARY, *sitting: a rose in her hand.*
LADY CLARENCE. ALICE *in the back-*
ground.

Mary. Look! I have play'd with
this poor rose so long
I have broken off the head.

Lady Clarence. Your Grace hath
been
More merciful to many a rebel head
That should have fallen, and may rise
again.

Mary. There were not many hang'd
for Wyatt's rising.

Lady Clarence. Nay, not two hun-
dred.

Mary. I could weep for them
And her, and mine own self and all
the world.

Lady Clarence. For her? for whom,
your Grace?

Enter USHER.

Usher. The Cardinal.

Enter CARDINAL POLE. (MARY *risés.*)

Mary. Reginald Pole, what news
hath plagued thy heart?
What makes thy favor like the blood-
less head
Fall'n on the block, and held up by
the hair?

Philip?—

Pole. No, Philip is as warm in life
As ever.

Mary. Ay, and then as cold as
ever.
Is Calais taken?

Pole. Cousin, there hath chanced
A sharper harm to England and to
Rome,

Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
Was ever just, and mild, and father-
like;

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the
Fourth,

Not only reft me of that legateship
Which Julius gave me, and the legate-
ship

Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but
worse—

And yet I must obey the Holy Father,
And so must you, good cousin;—
worse than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—
He hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
Before his Inquisition.

Mary. I knew it, cousin,
But held from you all papers sent by
Rome,

That you might rest among us, till
the Pope,
To compass which I wrote myself to
Rome,

Reversed his doom, and that you
might not seem
To disobey his Holiness.

Pole. He hates Philip;
He is all Italian, and he hates the
Spaniard;

He cannot dream that I advised the
war;

He strikes thro' me at Philip and
yourself.

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates
me too;

So brands me in the stare of Christen-
dom

A heretic!
Now, even now, when bow'd before
my time,

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be
out;

When I should guide the Church in
peace at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,
And all my lifelong labor to uphold

The primacy — a heretic. Long ago,
When I was ruler in the patrimony,
I was too lenient to the Lutheran,
And I and learned friends among our-
selves

Would freely canvass certain Luther-
anisms.

What then, he knew I was no Lutheran.
A heretic!

He drew this shaft against me to the
head,

When it was thought I might be
chosen Pope,

But then withdrew it. In full con-
sistory,

When I was made Archbishop, he
approved me.

And how should he have sent me
Legate hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what heresy
since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,
And hates the Spaniard — fiery-chol-
eric,

A drinker of black, strong, volcanic
wines,

That ever make him fierier. I, a
heretic?

Your Highness knows that in pursu-
ing heresy

I have gone beyond your late Lord
Chancellor, —

He cried Enough! enough! before
his death. —

Gone beyond him and mine own nat-
ural man

(It was God's cause); so far they call
me now,

The scourge and butcher of their Eng-
lish church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward
is Heaven itself.

Pole. They groan amen; they
swarm into the fire

Like flies — for what? no dogma.
They know nothing;

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pole. Have done my best, and as a
faithful son,

That all day long hath wrought his
father's work,

When back he comes at evening hath
the door

Shut on him by the father whom he
loved,

His early follies cast into his teeth,
And the poor son turn'd out into the
street

To sleep, to die — I shall die of it,
cousin.

Mary. I pray you be not so discon-
solate;

I still will do mine utmost with the
Pope.

Poor cousin!

Have not I been the fast friend of
your life

Since mine began, and it was thought
we two

Might make one flesh, and cleave
unto each other

As man and wife?

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember
How I would dandle you upon my
knee

At lisp'ing-age. I watch'd you danc-
ing once

With your huge father; he look'd the
Great Harry,

You but his cockboat; prettily you
did it,

And innocently. No — we were not
made

One flesh in happiness, no happiness
here;

But now we are made one flesh in
misery;

Our bridesmaids are not lovely — Dis-
appointment,

Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,
Labor-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at
heart myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead
men's clay,

Dug from the grave that yawns for
us beyond;

And there is one Death stands behind
the Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind
the Bride —

Mary. Have you been looking at
the "Dance of Death"?

Pole. No; but these libellous papers
which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you
here — the Pope

Pointing at me with "Pole, the here-
tic,

Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn
thyself,

Or I will burn thee;" and this other;
see! —

"We pray continually for the death
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal

Pole."

This last — I dare not read it her.
[Aside.

Mary. Why do you bring me these?
I thought you knew me better. I
never read,

I tear them; they come back upon my
dreams.

The hands that write them should be
burnt clean off

As Cranmer's, and the fiends that
utter them

Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to death, or lie

Famishing in black cells, while famish'd rats

Eat them alive. Why do they bring me these?

Do you mean to drive me mad?

Pole. I had forgotten how these poor libels trouble you.

Your pardon, Sweet cousin, and farewell! "O bubble world,

Whose colors in a moment break and fly!"

Why, who said that? I know not — true enough!

[*Puts up the papers, all but the last, which falls.* *Exit Pole.*

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a mocking one,

And heard these two, there might be sport for him. [*Aside.*

Mary. Clarence, they hate me; even while I speak

There lurks a silent dagger, listening In some dark closet, some long gal-

lery, drawn, And panting for my blood as I go by.

Lady Clarence. Nay, Madam, there be loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one!

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam; but Sir Nicholas Heath, the Chan-

cellor, Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him?

Lady Clarence. Well, Madam, he may bring you news from Philip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady Clarence. Let me first put up your hair;

It tumbles all abroad.

Mary. And the gray dawn Of an old age that never will be mine

Is all the clearer seen. No, no; what matters?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such grievous news

I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is taken.

Mary. What traitor spoke? Here, let my cousin Pole

Seize him and burn him for a Lutheran.

Heath. Her Highness is unwell. I will retire.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your Chancellor, Sir Nicholas Heath.

Mary. Sir Nicholas! I am stunn'd — Nicholas Heath?

Methought some traitor smote me on the head.

What said you, my good Lord, that our brave English

Had sallied out from Calais and driven back

The Frenchmen from their trenches?

Heath. Alas! no. That gateway to the mainland over

which Our flag hath floated for two hundred years

Is France again.

Mary. So; but it is not lost — Not yet. Send out: let England as of

old Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep

into The prey they are rending from her

— ay, and rend The renders too. Send out, send out,

and make Musters in all the counties; gather

all From sixteen years to sixty; collect the fleet;

Let every craft that carries sail and gun

Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not taken yet?

Heath. Guisnes is not taken yet.

Mary. There is yet hope.

Heath. Ah, Madam, but your people are so cold;

I do much fear that England will not care.

Methinks there is no manhood left among us.

Mary. Send out; I am too weak to stir abroad:

Tell my mind to the Council — to the Parliament:

Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art cold thyself

To babble of their coldness. O would I were

My father for an hour! Away now — Quick!

[*Exit Heath.* I hoped I had served God with all my

might! It seems I have not. Ah! much

heresy Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have

rebuilt Your shrines, set up your broken

images; Be comfortable to me. Suffer not

That my brief reign in England be defamed

Thro' all her angry chronicles here-after

By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais. Philip,

We have made war upon the Holy Father

All for your sake: what good could come of that?

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, not against the Holy Father;

You did but help King Philip's war with France,

Your troops were never down in Italy.

Mary. I am a byword. Heretic and rebel

Point at me and make merry. Philip gone!

And Calais gone! Time that I were gone too!

Lady Clarence. Nay, if the fetid gutter had a voice

And cried I was not clean, what should I care?

Or you, for heretic cries? And I believe,

Spite of your melancholy Sir Nicholas, Your England is as loyal as myself.

Mary (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).

There! there! another paper!

Said you not

Many of these were loyal? Shall I try

If this be one of such?

Lady Clarence. Let it be, let it be.

God pardon me! I have never yet found one. [*Aside.*

Mary (reads). "Your people hate you as your husband hates you."

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done? what sin

Beyond all grace, all pardon? Mother of God,

Thou knowest woman never meant so well,

And fared so ill in this disastrous world.

My people hate me and desire my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, no.

Mary. My husband hates me, and desires my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam; these are libels.

Mary. I hate myself, and I desire my death.

Lady Clarence. Long live your Majesty! Shall Alice sing you

One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my child,

Bring us your lute (*Alice goes*). They say the gloom of Saul

Was lighten'd by young David's harp. *Mary.* Too young!

And never knew a Philip.

Re-enter Alice.

Give me the lute.

He hates me!

(*She sings.*)

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing!

Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in loathing:

Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but say the world is nothing—

Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they first awaken;

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be overtaken;

Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade and are forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for me!

Alice. Your Grace hath a low voice.

Mary. How dare you say it?

Even for that he hates me. A low voice

Lost in a wilderness where none can hear!

A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea!

A low voice from the dust and from the grave

(*Sitting on the ground*). There, am I low enough now?

Alice. Good Lord! how grim and

ghastly looks her Grace, With both her knees drawn upward to her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were found

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks a corpse.

Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.

Lady Magdalen. Madam, the Count de Feria waits without,

In hopes to see your Highness.

Lady Clarence (pointing to Mary).

Wait he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor hears,

And may not speak for hours.

Lady Magdalen. Unhappiest Of Queens and wives and women!

Alice (in the foreground with Lady Magdalen.) And all along

Of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Not so loud! Our Clarence there

Sees ever such an aureole round the Queen,

It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,

Who stands the nearest to her.

Alice. Ay, this Philip; I used to love the Queen with all my heart—

God help me, but methinks I love her less

For such a dotage upon such a man.

I would I were as tall and strong as you.

Lady Magdalen. I seem half-shamed at times to be so tall.

Alice. You are the stateliest deer in
all the herd —

Beyond his aim — but I am small and
scandalous,
And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Why?

I never heard him utter worse of you
Than that you were low-statured.

Alice. Does he think
Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own?

Lady Magdalen. There you strike
in the nail.

This coarseness is a want of phantasy.
It is the low man thinks the woman
low;

Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as
well as dull.

How dared he?

Lady Magdalen. Stupid soldiers oft
are bold.

Poor lads, they see not what the general
sees,

A risk of utter ruin. I am not

Beyond his aim, or was not.

Alice. Who? Not you?

Tell, tell me; save my credit with
myself.

Lady Magdalen. I never breathed
it to a bird in the eaves,

Would not for all the stars and
maiden moon

Our drooping Queen should know! In
Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor;

And I was robing; — this poor throat
of mine,

Barer than I should wish a man to see
it, —

When he we speak of drove the window
back,

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal
hand;

But by God's providence a good stout
staff

Lay near me; and you know me
strong of arm;

I do believe I lamed his Majesty's
For a day or two, tho', give the Devil

his due,
I never found he bore me any spite.

Alice. I would she could have wedded
that poor youth,

My Lord of Devon — light enough,
God knows,

And mixt with Wyatt's rising — and
the boy

Not out of him — but neither cold,
coarse, cruel,

And more than all — no Spaniard.

Lady Clarence. Not so loud.

Lord Devon, girls! what are you
whispering here?

Alice. Probing an old state-secret —
how it chanced

That this young Earl was sent on
foreign travel,

Not lost his head.

Lady Clarence. There was no proof
against him.

Alice. Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner
intercept

A letter which the Count de Noailles
wrote

To that dead traitor Wyatt, with full
proof

Of Courtenay's treason? What became
of that?

Lady Clarence. Some say that
Gardiner, out of love for him,

Burnt it, and some relate that it was
lost

When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's
house in Southwark.

Let dead things rest.

Alice. Ay, and with him who died
Alone in Italy.

Lady Clarence. Much changed, I
hear,

Had put off levity and put graveness
on.

The foreign courts report him in his
manner

Noble as his young person and old
shield.

It might be so — but all is over
now;

He caught a chill in the lagoons of
Venice,

And died in Padua.

Mary (looking up suddenly). Died
in the true faith?

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam, happily.

Mary. Happier he than I.

Lady Magdalen. It seems her Highness
hath awaken'd. Think you

That I might dare to tell her that the
Count —

Mary. I will see no man hence for
evermore,

Saving my confessor and my cousin
Pole.

Lady Magdalen. It is the Count de
Feria, my dear lady.

Mary. What Count?

Lady Magdalen. The Count de
Feria, from his Majesty

King Philip.

Mary. Philip! quick! loop up my
hair!

Throw cushions on that seat, and make
it throne-like.

Arrange my dress — the gorgeous
Indian shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy
days! —

That covers all. So — am I somewhat
Queenlike,

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon earth ?

Lady Clarence. Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA (kneels).

Feria. I trust your Grace is well. *(Aside)* How her hand burns!

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me,

Sir Count, to read the letter which you bring.

Feria. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter ?

Feria. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs —

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his.

Feria. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his veriest love,

And says, he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed ?

You, sir, do you remember what you said

When last you came to England ?

Feria. Madam, I brought

My King's congratulations; it was hoped

Your Highness was once more in happy state

To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more;

You said he would come quickly. I had horses

On all the road from Dover, day and night;

On all the road from Harwich, night and day;

But the child came not, and the husband came not;

And yet he will come quickly. . . Thou hast learnt

Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no need

For Philip so to shame himself again. Return,

And tell him that I know he comes no more.

Tell him at last I know his love is dead,

And that I am in state to bring forth death —

Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth, And not to me!

Feria. Mere compliments and wishes.

But shall I take some message from your Grace ?

Mary. Tell her to come and close my dying eyes,

And wear my crown, and dance upon my grave.

Feria. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister ?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine.

I would we had you, Madam, in our warm Spain.

You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away! I sicken of his readiness.

Lady Clarence. My Lord Count, Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Feria (kneels, and kisses her hand).

I wish her Highness better.

(Aside) How her hand burns! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. — A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD, ATTENDANTS.

Elizabeth. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account;

Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it

Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

[Exit Steward.]

Attendant. The Count de FERIA from the King of Spain.

Elizabeth. Ah! — let him enter.

Nay, you need not go:

[To her Ladies.]

Remain within the chamber, but apart.

We'll have no private conference.

Welcome to England!

Enter FERIA.

Feria. Fair island star!

Elizabeth. I shine! What else, Sir Count ?

Feria. As far as France, and into Philip's heart.

My King would know if you be fairly served,

And lodged, and treated.

Elizabeth. You see the lodging, sir, I am well-served, and am in everything

Most loyal and most grateful to the Queen.

Feria. You should be grateful to my master, too.

He spoke of this; and unto him you owe

That Mary hath acknowledged you her heir.

Elizabeth. No, not to her nor him; but to the people,

Who know my right, and love me, as I love

The people! whom God aid!

Feria. You will be Queen,

And, were I Philip —

Elizabeth. Wherefore pause you —
what ?

Feria. Nay, but I speak from mine
own self, not him ;

Your royal sister cannot last ; your
hand

Will be much coveted ! What a deli-
cate one !

Our Spanish ladies have none such —
and there,

Were you in Spain, this fine fair gos-
samer gold —

Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty
dawn —

That hovers round your shoulder —

Elizabeth. Is it so fine ?
Troth, some have said so.

Feria. — would be deemed a mira-
cle.

Elizabeth. Your Philip hath gold
hair and golden beard ;

There must be ladies many with hair
like mine.

Feria. Some few of Gothic blood
have golden hair,

But none like yours.

Elizabeth. I am happy you approve
it.

Feria. But as to Philip and your
Grace — consider, —

If such a one as you should match
with Spain,

What hinders but that Spain and
England join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire
earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas,
and England

Mistress of the Indies.

Elizabeth. It may chance, that
England

Will be the Mistress of the Indies yet,
Without the help of Spain.

Feria. Impossible ;

Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's
dream.

Elizabeth. Perhaps ; but we have
seamen. Count de *Feria*,

I take it that the King hath spoken
to you ;

But is Don Carlos such a goodly
match ?

Feria. Don Carlos, Madam, is but
twelve years old.

Elizabeth. Ay, tell the King that I
will muse upon it ;

He is my good friend, and I would
keep him so ;

But — he would have me Catholic of
Rome,

And that I scarce can be ; and, sir, till
now

My sister's marriage, and my father's
marriages,

Make me full fain to live and die a
maid.

But I am much beholden to your
King.

Have you aught else to tell me ?

Feria. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from
the Queen

That she would see your Grace before
she — died.

Elizabeth. God's death ! and where-
fore spake you not before ?

We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses

there, without !

I am much beholden to the King, your
master.

Why did you keep me prating ?
Horses, there !

[*Exit Elizabeth, etc.*]

Feria. So from a clear sky falls the
thunderbolt !

Don Carlos ? Madam, if you marry
Philip,

Then I and he will snaffle your " God's
death,"

And brake your paces in, and make
you tame ;

God's death, forsooth — you do not
know King Philip. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. — LONDON. BEFORE
THE PALACE.

*A light burning within. Voices of the
night passing.*

First. Is not yon light in the
Queen's chamber ?

Second. Ay,

They say she's dying.

First. So is Cardinal Pole.

May the great angels join their wings,
and make

Down for their heads to heaven !

Second. Amen. Come on.
[*Exeunt.*]

TWO OTHERS.

First. There's the Queen's light.
I hear she cannot live.

Second. God curse her and her
Legate ! Gardiner burns

Already ; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den

Were but a sort of winter ; sir, in
Guernsey,

I watch'd a woman burn ; and in her
agonny

The mother came upon her — a child
was born —

And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the
fire,

That, being but baptised in fire, the
babe

Might be in fire for ever. 'Ah, good neighbor,
There should be something fierier than fire

To yield them their deserts.

First. Amen to all.

Your wish, and further.

A Third Voice. Deserts! Amen to what? Whose deserts? Yours? You have a gold ring on your finger, and soft raiment about your body; and is not the woman up yonder sleeping after all she has done, in peace and quietness, on a soft bed, in a closed room, with light, fire, physic, tendance; and I have seen the true men of Christ lying famine-dead by scores, and under no ceiling but the cloud that wept on them, not for them.

First. Friend, tho' so late, it is not safe to preach.

You had best go home. What are you?

Third. What am I? One who cries continually with sweat and tears to the Lord God that it would please Him out of His infinite love to break down all kingship and queenship, all priesthood and prelacy; to cancel and abolish all bonds of human allegiance, all the magistracy, all the nobles, and all the wealthy; and to send us again, according to His promise, the one King, the Christ, and all things in common, as in the day of the first church, when Christ Jesus was King.

First. If ever I heard a madman, — let's away!

Why, you long-winded — Sir, you go beyond me.

I pride myself on being moderate. Good night! Go home. Besides, you curse so loud,

The watch will hear you. Get you home at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

A Gallery on one side. The moonlight streaming through a range of windows on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN DACRES, ALICE. QUEEN pacing the Gallery. A writing-table in front. QUEEN comes to the table and writes and goes again, pacing the Gallery.

Lady Clarence. Mine eyes are dim: what hath she written? read.

Alice. "I am dying, Philip; come to me."

Lady Magdalen. There — up and down, poor lady, up and down.

Alice. And how her shadow crosses one by one

The moonlight casements pattern'd on the wall,
Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.

[*Queen sits and writes, and goes again.*]

Lady Clarence. What hath she written now?

Alice. Nothing; but "come, come, come," and all awry,

And blotted by her tears. This cannot last. [*Queen returns.*]

Mary. I whistle to the bird has broken cage,

And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*]

Calais gone — Guisnes gone, too — and Philip gone!

Lady Clarence. Dear Madam, Philip is but at the wars;

I cannot doubt but that he comes again;

And he is with you in a measure still. I never look'd upon so fair a likeness

As your great King in armor there, his hand

Upon his helmet.

[*Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.*]

Mary. Doth he not look noble?

I had heard of him in battle over seas,

And I would have my warrior all in arms.

He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted

Before the Queen. He had his gracious moment,

Altho' you'll not believe me. How he smiles

As if he loved me yet!

Lady Clarence. And so he does.

Mary. He never loved me — nay, he could not love me.

It was his father's policy against France.

I am eleven years older than he,

Poor boy! [*Weeps.*]

Alice. That was a lusty boy of twenty-seven; [*Aside.*]

Poor enough in God's grace!

Mary. — And all in vain!

The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin,

And Charles, the lord of this low world, is gone;

And all his wars and wisdoms past away;

And in a moment I shall follow him.

Lady Clarence. Nay, dearest Lady, see your good physician.

Mary. Drugs — but he knows they cannot help me — says

That rest is all — tells me I must not think —

That I must rest — I shall rest by and by.

Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when
he springs

And maims himself against the bars,
say "rest":

Why, you must kill him if you would
have him rest —

Dead or alive you cannot make him
happy.

Lady Clarence. Your Majesty has
lived so pure a life,
And done such mighty things by Holy
Church,

I trust that God will make you happy
yet.

Mary. What is the strange thing
happiness? Sit down here:

Tell me thine happiest hour.

Lady Clarence. I will, if that
May make your Grace forget yourself
a little.

There runs a shallow brook across our
field

For twenty miles, where the black
crow flies five,

And doth so bound and babble all the
way

As if itself were happy. It was May-
time,

And I was walking with the man I
loved.

I loved him, but I thought I was not
loved.

And both were silent, letting the wild
brook

Speak for us — till he stoop'd and
gather'd one

From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me, and
gave it me.

I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at
once

I felt his arms about me, and his lips —

Mary. O God! I have been too
slack, too slack;

There are Hot Gospellers even among
our guards —

Nobles we dared not touch. We have
but burnt

The heretic priest, workmen, and
women and children.

Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm,
wreck, wrath, —

We have so play'd the coward; but by
God's grace,

We'll follow Philip's leading, and set
up

The Holy Office here — garner the
wheat,

And burn the tares with unquenchable
fire!

Burn! —

Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to
close

The doors of all the offices below.

Latimer!

Sir, we are private with our women
here —

Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly
fellow —

Thou light a torch that never will go out!
'Tis out — mine flames. Women, the

Holy Father

Has ta'en the legateship from our
cousin Pole —

Was that well done? and poor Pole
pines of it,

As I do, to the death. I am but a
woman,

I have no power. — Ah, weak and
meek old man,

Seven-fold dishonor'd even in the
sight

Of thine own sectaries — No, no. No
pardon! —

Why that was false: there is the right
hand still

Beckons me hence.

Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for
treason,

Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner
did it,

And Pole; we are three to one — Have
you found mercy there,

Grant it me here: and see, he smiles
and goes,

Gentle as in life.

Alice. Madam, who goes? King
Philip?

Mary. No, Philip comes and goes,
but never goes.

Women, when I am dead,
Open my heart, and there you will
find written

Two names, Philip and Calais; open
his, —

So that he have one, —

You will find Philip only, policy, pol-
icy, —

Ay, worse than that — not one hour
true to me!

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd
vice!

Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.
Hast thou a knife?

Alice. Ay, Madam, but o' God's
mercy —

Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would
peril mine own soul

By slaughter of the body? I could
not, girl,

Not this way — callous with a constant
stripe,

Unwoundable. The knife!

Alice. Take heed, take heed!
The blade is keen as death.

Mary. This Philip shall not
Stare in upon me in my haggardness;
Old, miserable, diseased,
Incapable of children. Come thou
down.

[Cuts out the picture and throws it down.]

Lie there. (*Wails*) O God, I have
kill'd my Philip!

Alice. No,
Madam, you have but cut the canvas
out;

We can replace it.

Mary. All is well then; rest —
I will to rest; he said, I must have
rest. [*Cries of "Elizabeth" in
the street.*]

A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? re-
volt?

A new Northumberland, another
Wyatt?

I'll fight it on the threshold of the
grave.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your royal
sister comes to see you.

Mary. I will not see her.
Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be
my sister?

I will see none except the priest. Your
arm. [*To Lady Clarence.*]

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet
worn smile

Among thy patient wrinkles — Help
me hence. [*Exeunt.*]

The Priest passes. Enter ELIZABETH
and SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

Elizabeth. Good counsel yours —

No one in waiting? still,
As if the chamberlain were Death
himself!

The room she sleeps in — is not this
the way?

No, that way there are voices. Am I
too late?

Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose
the way. [*Exit Elizabeth.*]

Cecil. Many points weather'd, many
perilous ones,

At last a harbor opens; but therein
Sunk rocks — they need fine steering
— much it is

To be nor mad, nor bigot — have a
mind —

Nor let the Priests talk, or dream of
worlds to be,

Miscolor things about her — sudden
touches

For him, or him — sunk rocks; no
passionate faith —

But — if let be — balance and com-
promise;

Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her
— a Tudor

School'd by the shadow of death — a
Boleyn, too,

Glancing across the Tudor — not so
well.

Enter ALICE.

How is the good Queen now?

Alice. Away from Philip.
Back in her childhood — prattling to
her mother

Of her betrothal to the Emperor
Charles,

And childlike-jealous of him again —
and once

She thank'd her father sweetly for his
book

Against that godless German. Ah,
those days

Were happy. It was never merry
world

In England, since the Bible came
among us.

Cecil. And who says that?

Alice. It is a saying among the
Catholics.

Cecil. It never will be merry world
in England,

Till all men have their Bible, rich and
poor.

Alice. The Queen is dying, or you
dare not say it.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth. The Queen is dead.

Cecil. Then here she stands! my
homage.

Elizabeth. She knew me, and ac-
knowledge'd me her heir,

Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep
the Faith;

Then claspt the cross, and pass'd
away in peace.

I left her lying still and beautiful,
More beautiful than in life. Why would
you vex yourself,

Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no
heart

To be your Queen. To reign is rest-
less fence,

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is
with the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring
was nipt;

And she loved much: pray God she
be forgiven.

Cecil. Peace with the dead, who
never were at peace!

Yet she loved one so much — I needs
must say —

That never English monarch dying left
England so little.

Elizabeth. But with Cecil's aid
And others, if our person be secured
From traitor stabs — we will make
England great.

Enter PAGET, and other LORDS OF THE
COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL,
etc.

Lords. God save Elizabeth, the
Queen of England!

Bagenhall. God save the Crown!
the Papacy is no more.

Paget (aside). Are we so sure of
that?

Acclamation. God save the Queen!

HAROLD :

A DRAMA.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

MY DEAR LORD LYTTON, — After old-world records — such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou, — Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his "Harold" to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my "Harold" to yourself.

A. TENNYSON.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A GARDEN here — May breath and bloom of spring —
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying "with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest:" and fancy hears the ring
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,
And Saxon battleaxe clang on Norman helm.
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:
Here fought, here fell, our Norman slander'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago;
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good —
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND, *created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict.*

ALDRED, *Archbishop of York.*

THE NORMAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

HAROLD, *Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England*

TOSTIG, *Earl of Northumbria*

GURTH, *Earl of East Anglia*

LEOFWIN, *Earl of Kent and Essex*

WULFNOTH

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM MALET, *a Norman Noble.*¹

EDWIN, *Earl of Mercia*

MORCAR, *Earl of Northumbria after Tostig*

GAMEL, *a Northumbrian Thane.*

ROLF, *a Ponthieu Fisherman.*

OSGOD and ATHELRIC, *Canons from Waltham.*

THE QUEEN, *Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Godwin.*

ALDWYTH, *Daughter of Alfgar and Widow of Griffith, King of Wales.*

EDITH, *Ward of King Edward.*

Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Canons of Waltham,
Fishermen, etc.

¹ . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus
Compter Herald. (*Guy of Amiens*, 587.)

ACT I.

SCENE I. — LONDON. THE KING'S PALACE.

(*A comet seen through the open window.*)

ALDWYTH, GAMEL, COURTIERS *talking together.*

First Courtier. Lo! there once more
— this is the seventh night!
You grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd
scourge
Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

First Courtier. Look you, there's
a star

That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in
Hell who skips and flies

To right and left, and cannot scape
the flame.

Second Courtier. Steam'd upward
from the undescendable

Abysm.

First Courtier. Or floated down-
ward from the throne

Of God Almighty.

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?

Gamel. War, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Dost this affright thee?

Gamel. Mightily, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Stand by me then, and
look upon my face,

Not on the comet.

(*Enter MORCAR.*)

Brother! why so pale?

Morcar. It glares in heaven, it
flares upon the Thames,

The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees, — they cannot
speak — for awe;

Look to the skies, then to the river,
strike

Their hearts, and hold their babies up
to it.

I think that they would Molochize
them too,

To have the heavens clear.

Aldwyth. They fright not me.

(*Enter LEOFWIN, after him GURTH.*)

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he
thinks of this!

Morcar. Lord Leofwin, dost thou
believe, that these

Three rods of blood-red fire up yon-
der mean

The doom of England and the wrath
of Heaven?

Bishop of London (passing). Did ye
not cast with bestial violence

Our holy Norman bishops down from
all

Their thrones in England? I alone
remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

Leofwin. With us, or thee?

Bishop of London. Did ye not out-
law your archbishop Robert,
Robert of Jumiéges — well-nigh mur-
der him too?

Is there no reason for the wrath of
Heaven?

Leofwin. Why then the wrath of
Heaven hath three tails,

The devil only one.

[*Exit Bishop of London.*]

(*Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.*)

Ask our Archbishop.

Stigand should know the purposes of
Heaven.

Stigand. Not I. I cannot read the
face of heaven;

Perhaps our vines will grow the better
for it.

Leofwin (laughing). He can but read
the king's face on his coins.

Stigand. Ay, ay, young lord, there
the king's face is power.

Gurth. O father, mock not at a
public fear,

But tell us, is this pendent hell in
heaven

A harm to England?

Stigand. Ask it of King Edward!

And he may tell thee, I am a harm to
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand — ask of me
Who had my pallium from an Anti-
pope!

Not he the man — for in our windy
world

What's up is faith, what's down is
heresy.

Our friends, the Normans, help to
shake his chair.

I have a Norman fever on me, son,
And cannot answer sanely . . . What
it means?

Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to HAROLD, who enters.*]

Harold (seeing Gamel). Hail, Ga-
mel, son of Orm!

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend
Gamel,

Thou hast rounded since we met.
Thy life at home

Is easier than mine here. Look! am
I not

Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

Gamel. Art thou sick, good
Earl?

Harold. Sick as an autumn swal-
low for a voyage,

Sick for an idle week of hawk and
hound

Beyond the seas — a change! When
camest thou hither?

Gamel. To-day, good Earl.

Harold. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

Gamel. Nay, there be murmurs, for
thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing — quiet, ay, as yet —
Nothing as yet.

Harold. Stand by him, mine old
friend,

Thou art a great voice in Northum-
berland!

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he
will hear thee.

He is passionate but honest. Stand
thou by him!

More talk of this to-morrow, if yon
weird sign

Not blast us in our dreams. — Well,
father Stigand —

[*To Stigand, who advances to him.*
Stigand (pointing to the comet). War
there, my son? is that the doom
of England?

Harold. Why not the doom of all
the world as well?

For all the world sees it as well as
England.

These meteors came and went before
our day,

Not harming any: it threatens us no
more

Than French or Norman. War? the
worst that follows

Things that seem'd jerk'd out of the
common rut

Of Nature is the hot religious fool,
Who, seeing war in heaven, for
heaven's credit

Makes it on earth: but look, where
Edward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tos-
tig.

He hath learnt to love our Tostig
much of late.

Leofwin. And he hath learnt, de-
spite the tiger in him,
To sleek and supple himself to the
king's hand.

Gurth. I trust the kingly touch
that cures the evil
May serve to charm the tiger out of
him.

Leofwin. He hath as much of cat
as tiger in him.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not
the man.

Harold. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter KING, QUEEN, and TOSTIG.

Edward. In heaven signs!
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!
your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
They scarce can read their Psalter;
and your churches

Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Nor-
manland
God speaks thro' abler voices, as He
dwells

In statelier shrines. I say not this,
as being

Half Norman-blooded, nor as some
have held,

Because I love the Norman better —
no,

But dreading God's revenge upon this
realm

For narrowness and coldness: and I
say it

For the last time perchance, before I
go

To find the sweet refreshment of the
Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity:
I have builded the great church of

Holy Peter:

I have wrought miracles — to God
the glory —

And miracles will in my name be
wrought

Hereafter. — I have fought the fight
and go —

I see the flashing of the gates of
pearl —

And it is well with me, tho' some of
you

Have scorn'd me — ay — but after I
am gone

Woe, woe to England! I have had a
vision;

The seven sleepers in the cave at
Ephesus

Have turn'd from right to left.

Harold. My most dear Master,
What matters? let them turn from
left to right

And sleep again.

Tostig. Too hardy with thy king!
A life of prayer and fasting well may
see

Deeper into the mysteries of heaven
Than thou, good brother.

Aldwyth (aside). Sees he into thine,
That thou wouldst have his promise
for the crown?

Edward. Tostig says true; my son,
thou art too hard,

Not stagger'd by this ominous earth
and heaven:

But heaven and earth are threads of
the same loom,

Play into one another, and weave the
web

That may confound thee yet.

Harold. Nay, I trust not,
For I have served thee long and
honestly.

Edward. I know it, son; I am not
thankless: thou

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for
me

The weight of this poor crown, and
left me time
And peace for prayer to gain a better
one.

Twelve years of service! England
loves thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

Aldwyth (aside). So, not Tostig!

Harold. And after those twelve
years a boon, my king,

Respite, a holiday: thyself wast wont
To love the chase: thy leave to set
my feet

On board, and hunt and hawk beyond
the seas!

Edward. What with this flaming
horror overhead?

Harold. Well, when it passes then.

Edward. Ay, if it pass.

Go not to Normandy — go not to Nor-
mandy.

Harold. And wherefore not, my
king, to Normandy?

Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage
there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee?
I pray thee, let me hence and bring
him home.

Edward. Not thee, my son: some
other messenger.

Harold. And why not me, my lord,
to Normandy?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend
and mine?

Edward. I pray thee, do not go to
Normandy.

Harold. Because my father drove
the Normans out

Of England? — That was many a
summer gone —

Forgotten and forgiven by them and
thee.

Edward. Harold, I will not yield
thee leave to go.

Harold. Why then to Flanders. I
will hawk and hunt

In Flanders.

Edward. Be there not fair woods
and fields

In England? Wilful, wilful. Go —
the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering
out

And homeward. Tostig, I am faint
again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for
thee.

[*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and fol-
lowed by Stigand, Morcar, and
Courtiers.*

Harold. What lies upon the mind of
our good king

That he should harp this way on
Normandy?

Queen. Brother, the king is wiser
than he seems;

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves
the king.

Harold. And love should know; and
— be the king so wise, —

Then Tostig too were wiser than he
seems.

I love the man but not his phantasies.

(*Re-enter TOSTIG.*)

Well, brother,

When didst thou hear from thy
Northumbria?

Tostig. When did I hear aught but
this "When" from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my
Northumbria:

She is my mistress, let me look to her!
The King hath made me Earl; make
me not fool!

Nor make the King a fool, who made
me Earl!

Harold. No, Tostig — lest I make
myself a fool

Who made the King who made thee,
make thee Earl.

Tostig. Why chafe me then? Thou
knowest I soon go wild.

Gurth. Come, come! as yet thou art
not gone so wild

But thou canst hear the best and
wisest of us.

Harold. So says old Gurth, not I:
yet hear! thine earldom,

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their
old crown

Is yet a force among them, a sun
set

But leaving light enough for Alfgar's
house

To strike thee down by — nay, this
ghastly glare

May heat their fancies.

Tostig. My most worthy brother,
Thou art the quietest man in all the
world —

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in
war —

Pray God the people choose thee for
their king!

But all the powers of the house of
Godwin

Are not enframed in thee.

Harold. Thank the Saints, no!
But thou hast drain'd them shallow
by thy tolls,

And thou art ever here about the
King:

Thine absence well may seem a want
of care.

Cling to their love; for, now the sons
of Godwin

Sit topmost in the field of England,
envy,

Like the rough bear beneath the tree,
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

Tostig. Good counsel truly !
I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.

Harold. How goes it then with thy Northumbria ? Well ?

Tostig. And wouldst thou that it went aught else than well ?

Harold. I would it went as well as with mine earldom,

Leofwin's and Gurth's.

Tostig. Ye govern milder men.

Gurth. We have made them milder by just government.

Tostig. Ay, ever give yourselves your own good word.

Leofwin. An honest gift, by all the Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest ! but they bribe

Each other, and so often, an honest world

Will not believe them.

Harold. I may tell thee, Tostig, I heard from thy Northumberland to-day.

Tostig. From spies of thine to spy my nakedness !

In my poor North !

Harold. There is a movement there, A blind one — nothing yet.

Tostig. Crush it at once
With all the power I have ! — I must — I will ! —

Crush it half-born ! Fool still ? or wisdom there,

My wise head-shaking Harold ?

Harold. Make not thou The nothing something : Wisdom when in power

And wisest, should not frown as Power, but smile

As kindness, watching all, till the true must

Shall make her strike as Power : but when to strike —

O Tostig, O dear brother — If they prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear and run,

And break both neck and axle.

Tostig. Good again !
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour not water

In the full vessel running out at top To swamp the house.

Leofwin. Nor thou be a wild thing Out of the waste, to turn and bite the hand

Would help thee from the trap.

Tostig. Thou playest in tune.
Leofwin. To the deaf adder thee, that wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

Tostig. No more, no more !
Gurth. I likewise cry "no more."

Unwholesome talk

For Godwin's house ! Leofwin, thou hast a tongue !

Tostig, thou look'st as thou wouldst spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by ! Come, come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity ;
Let kith and kin stand close as our shield-wall,

Who breaks us then ? I say, thou hast a tongue,

And Tostig is not stout enough to bear it.

Vex him not, Leofwin.

Tostig. No, I am not vext, —
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.
I have, to make report of my good earldom

To the good king who gave it — not to you —

Not any of you. — I am not vext at all.

Harold. The king ? the king is ever at his prayers ;

In all that handles matter of the state

I am the king.

Tostig. That shalt thou never be
If I can thwart thee.

Harold. Brother, brother !

Tostig. Away !

[Exit Tostig.]

Queen. Spite of this grisly star ye three must gall

Poor Tostig.

Leofwin. Tostig, sister, galls himself ;

He cannot smell a rose but pricks his nose

Against the thorn, and rails against the rose.

Queen. I am the only rose of all the stock

That never thorn'd him ; Edward loves him, so

Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.

Why — how they fought when boys — and, Holy Mary !

How Harold used to beat him !

Harold. Why, boys will fight.
Leofwin would often fight me, and I beat him.

Even old Gurth would fight. I had much ado

To hold mine own against old Gurth. Old Gurth,

We fought like great states for grave cause ; but Tostig —

On a sudden — at a something — for a nothing —

The boy would fust me hard, and when we fought

I conquer'd, and he loved me none the less,

Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and tell him

That where he was but worsted, he was wrong'd.

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil him too;

Now the spoilt child sways both. Take heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl no more;

Side not with Tostig in any violence, Lest thou be sideways guilty of the violence.

Queen. Come fall not foul on me. I leave thee, brother.

Harold. Nay, my good sister—
[*Exeunt Queen, Harold, Gurth, and Leofwin.*]

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm, What thinkest thou this means?

[*Pointing to the comet.*]

Gamel. War, my dear lady, War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities.

Aldwyth. It means the fall of Tostig from his earldom.

Gamel. That were too small a matter for a comet!

Aldwyth. It means the lifting of the house of Alfgar.

Gamel. Too small! a comet would not show for that!

Aldwyth. Not small for thee, if thou canst compass it.

Gamel. Thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as I can give thee, man;

This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant; Stir up thy people: oust him!

Gamel. And thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as thou canst bear.

Gamel. I can bear all,

And not be giddy.

Aldwyth. No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II. — IN THE GARDEN. THE KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON. SUNSET.

Edith. Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . .

I love thee for it — ay, but stay a moment;

He can but stay a moment: he is going.

I fain would hear him coming! . . . near me . . . near,

Somewhere — To draw him nearer with a charm

Like thine to thine.

(*Singing.*)

Love is come with a song and a smile, Welcome Love with a smile and a song:

Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay? They call him away:

Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong: Love will stay for a whole life long.

Enter HAROLD.

Harold. The nightingales at Haverling-in-the-bower Sang out their loves so loud, that Edward's prayers Were deafen'd and he pray'd them dumb, and thus

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightingale! [*Kissing her.*]

Edith. Thou art my music! Would their wings were mine To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou go?

Harold. Not must, but will. It is but for one moon.

Edith. Leaving so many foes in Edward's hall

To league against thy weal. The Lady Aldwyth

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd on thee,

She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

Harold. Well, I have given her cause —

I fear no woman.

Edith. Hate not one who felt Some pity for thy hater! I am sure Her morning wanted sunlight, she so praised

The convent and lone life — within the pale —

Beyond the passion. Nay — she held with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

Harold. A lesson worth Finger and thumb — thus (*snaps his fingers*). And my answer to it —

See here — an interwoven H and E! Take thou this ring; I will demand

his ward

From Edward when I come again.

Ay, would she?

She to shut up my blossom in the dark! Thou art my nun, thy cloister in mine arms.

Edith (*taking the ring*). Yea, but Earl Tostig —

Harold. That's a truer fear! For if the North take fire, I should be back;

I shall be, soon enough.

Edith. Ay, but last night An evil dream that ever came and went —

Harold. A gnat that vexed thy pillow! Had I been by, I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl, what was it?

Edith. Oh! that thou wert not going!
For so methought it was our marriage-morn,
And while we stood together, a dead man
Rose from behind the altar, tore away
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal veil;
And then I turn'd, and saw the church
all fill'd
With dead men upright from their graves, and all
The dead men made at thee to murder thee,
But thou didst back thyself against a pillar,
And strike among them with thy battle-axe —
There, what a dream!

Harold. Well, well — a dream — no more!

Edith. Did not Heaven speak to men in dreams of old?

Harold. Ay — well — of old. I tell thee what, my child;
Thou hast misread this merry dream of thine,
Taken the rifted pillars of the wood
For smooth stone columns of the sanctuary,
The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the battle-axe
Was out of place; it should have been the bow. —
Come, thou shalt dream no more such dreams; I swear it,
By mine own eyes — and these two sapphires — these
Twin rubies, that are amulets against all
The kisses of all kind of womankind
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me back
To tumble at thy feet.

Edith. That would but shame me,
Rather than make me vain. The sea may roll
Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the living rock
Which guards the land.

Harold. Except it be a soft one,
And undereaten to the fall. Mine amulet . . .
This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to shut in
A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and thou shalt see
My greyhounds fleeting like a beam of light,
And hear my peregrine and her bells in heaven;
And other bells on earth, which yet are heaven's;
Guess what they be.

Edith. He cannot guess who knows.
Farewell, my king.

Harold. Not yet, but then — my queen. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ALDWYTH from the thicket.

Aldwyth. The kiss that charms thine eyelids into sleep,
Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I could love him
More, tenfold, than this fearful child can do;
Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe
Of England? Griffyth when I saw him flee,
Chased deer-like up his mountains, all the blood
That should have only pulsed for Griffyth, beat
For his pursuer. I love him or think I love him.

If he were King of England, I his queen,
I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love him. —

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the king
Should yield his ward to Harold's will.

What harm?
She hath but blood enough to live, not love. —

When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I play

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn upon him?

Chime in with all? "O thou more saint than king!"

And that were true enough. "O blessed relics!"

"O Holy Peter!" If he found me thus,
Harold might hate me; he is broad and honest,

Breathing an easy gladness . . . not like Aldwyth . . .

For which I strangely love him. Should not England

Love Aldwyth, if she stays the feuds that part

The sons of Godwin from the sons of Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble Aldwyth!

Let all thy people bless thee!

Our wild Tostig,
Edward hath made him Earl: he would be king: —

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt the bone. —

I trust he may do well, this Gamel, whom

I play upon, that he may play the note
Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and Harold

Hear the king's music, all alone with him,

Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it. —
 Peace-lover is our Harold for the
 sake
 Of England's wholeness — so — to
 shake the North
 With earthquake and disruption —
 some division —
 Then fling mine own fair person in the
 gap
 A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,
 A scape-goat marriage — all the sins
 of both
 The houses on mine head — then a
 fair life
 And bless the Queen of England.
Morcar (coming from the thicket). Art
 thou assured
 By this, that Harold loves but Edith?
Aldwyth. Morcar!
 Why creep'st thou like a timorous
 beast of prey
 Out of the bush by night?
Morcar. I follow'd thee.
Aldwyth. Follow my lead, and I
 will make thee earl.
Morcar. What lead then?
Aldwyth. Thou shalt flash it secretly
 Among the good Northumbrian folk,
 that I —
 That Harold loves me — yea, and pres-
 ently
 That I and Harold are betroth'd — and
 last —
 Perchance that Harold wrongs me;
 tho' I would not
 That it should come to that.
Morcar. I will both flash
 And thunder for thee.
Aldwyth. I said "secretly";
 It is the flash, that murders, the poor
 thunder
 Never harm'd head.
Morcar. But thunder may bring
 down
 That which the flash hath stricken.
Aldwyth. Down with Tostig!
 That first of all. — And when doth
 Harold go?
Morcar. To-morrow — first to Bos-
 ham, then to Flanders.
Aldwyth. Not to come back till
 Tostig shall have shown
 And redden'd with his people's blood
 the teeth
 That shall be broken by us — yea, and
 thou
 Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and
 dream thyself
 Their chosen Earl. [*Exit Aldwyth.*]
Morcar. Earl first, and after that
 Who knows I may not dream myself
 their king!

ACT II.

SCENE I. — SEASHORE. PONTIEU.
NIGHT.

HAROLD and his Men, wrecked.

Harold. Friends, in that last inhospitable plunge
 Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours
 are whole;
 I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into
 My old fast friend the shore, and cling-
 ing thus
 Felt the remorseless outdraught of the
 deep

Haul like a great strong fellow at my
 legs,

And then I rose and ran. The blast
 that came

So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly —
 Put thou the comet and this blast to-
 gether —

Harold. Put thou thyself and
 mother-wit together.
 Be not a fool!

(*Enter Fishermen with torches, HAROLD
 going up to one of them, ROLF.*)

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp!
 Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy ly-
 ing lights
 Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks
 of thine!

Rolf. Ay, but thou liest as loud as
 the black herring-pond behind thee.
 We be fishermen; I came to see after
 my nets.

Harold. To drag us into them.
 Fishermen? devils!

Who, while ye fish for men with your
 false fires,
 Let the great Devil fish for your own
 souls.

Rolf. Nay then, we be liker the
 blessed Apostles; *they* were fishers of
 men, Father Jean says.

Harold. I had liefer that the fish
 had swallowed me,
 Like Jonah, than have known there
 were such devils.

What's to be done?

[*To his Men — goes apart with them.*]
Fisherman. Rolf, what fish did
 swallow Jonah?

Rolf. A whale!

Fisherman. Then a whale to a whelk
 we have swallowed the King of Eng-
 land. I saw him over there. Look
 thee, Rolf, when I was down in the
 fever, *she* was down with the hunger,
 and thou didst stand by her and give
 her thy crabs, and set her up again,
 till now, by the patient Saints, *she's*
 as crabb'd as ever.

Rolf. And I'll give her my crabs again, when thou art down again.

Fisherman. I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou to Count Guy; he is hard at hand. Tell him what hath crept into our creel, and he will fee thee as freely as he will wrench this outlander's ransom out of him — and why not? for what right had he to get himself wrecked on another man's land?

Rolf. Thou art the human-heartedest, Christian-charitiest of all crab-catchers. Share and share alike!

[*Erit.*

Harold (to Fisherman). Fellow, dost thou catch crabs?

Fisherman. As few as I may in a wind, and less than I would in a calm. Ay!

Harold. I have a mind that thou shalt catch no more.

Fisherman. How?

Harold. I have a mind to brain thee with mine axe.

Fisherman. Ay, do, do, and our great Count-crab will make his nippers meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look, he's here! He'll speak for himself! Hold thine own, if thou canst!

Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTIEUX.

Harold. Guy, Count of Ponthieu?

Guy. Harold, Earl of Wessex!

Harold. Thy villains with their lying lights have wreck'd us!

Guy. Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

Harold. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a bush,

And leave them for a year, and coming back
Find them again.

Guy. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom!

Harold. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex — if I caught them, they should hang

Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-mew

Winging their only wail!

Guy. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreck are accursed of God; —

What hinders me to hold with mine own men?

Harold. The Christian manhood of the man who reigns!

Guy. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our oubliettes

Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him hence!

[*To one of his Attendants.*

Fly thou to William; tell him we have Harold.

SCENE II. — BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM AND WILLIAM MALET.

William. We hold our Saxon woodcock in the springe,
But he begins to flutter. As I think
He was thine host in England when I went
To visit Edward.

Malet. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher fashions,

I found him all a noble host should be.

William. Thou art his friend: thou know'st my claim on England
Thro' Edward's promise: we have him in the toils.

And it were well, if thou shouldst let him feel,

How dense a fold of danger nets him round,

So that he bristle himself against my will.

Malet. What would I do, my lord, if I were you?

William. What wouldst thou do?

Malet. My lord, he is thy guest.

William. Nay, by the splendor of God, no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by

To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for the fate

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon blast,

And bolts of thunder moulded in high heaven

To serve the Norman purpose, drave and crack'd

His boat on Ponthieu beach; where our friend Guy

Had wrung his ransom from him by the rack,

But that I stept between and purchased him,

Translating his captivity from Guy
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where he sits

My ransom'd prisoner.

Malet. Well, if not with gold
With golden deeds and iron strokes that brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier close

Than else had been, he paid his ransom back.

William. So that henceforth they are not like to league

With Harold against me.

Malet. A marvel, how
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armor'd
Normans up

To fight for thee again!

William. Perchance against
Their savor, save thou save him from
himself.

Malet. But I should let him home
again, my lord.

William. Simple! let fly the bird
within the hand,
To catch the bird again within the
bush!

No.

Smooth thou my way, before he clash
with me;

I want his voice in England for the
crown,

I want thy voice with him to bring him
round;

And being brave he must be subtly
cow'd,

And being truthful wrought upon to
swear

Vows that he dare not break. Eng-
land our own

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my
dear friend

As well as thine, and thou thyself
shalt have

Large lordship there of lands and ter-
ritory.

Malet. I knew thy purpose; he and
Wulfnoth never

Have met, except in public; shall
they meet

In private? I have often talk'd with
Wulfnoth,

And stuff'd the boy with fears that
these may act

On Harold when they meet.

William. Then let them meet!

Malet. I can but love this noble,
honest Harold.

William. Love him! why not?
thine is a loving office,

I have commission'd thee to save the
man:

Help the good ship, showing the
sunken rock,

Or he is wreckt for ever.

Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.

William Rufus. Father.

William. Well, boy.

William Rufus. They have taken
away the toy thou gavest me,
The Norman knight.

William. Why, boy?

William Rufus. Because I broke
The horse's leg — it was mine own to
break;

I like to have my toys, and break them
too.

William. Well, thou shalt have
another Norman knight!

William Rufus. And may I break
his legs?

William. Yea, — get thee gone!

William Rufus. I'll tell them I have
had my way with thee. [*Exit.*

Malet. I never knew thee check thy
will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

William. Who shall be kings of
England. I am heir

Of England by the promise of her king.

Malet. But there the great As-
sembly choose their king,

The choice of England is the voice of
England.

William. I will be king of England
by the laws,

The choice, and voice of England.

Malet. Can that be?

William. The voice of any people
is the sword

That guards them, or the sword that
beats them down.

Here comes the would-be what I will
be . . . kinglike . . .

Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our
meshes break,

More kinglike he than like to prove a
king.

(*Enter HAROLD, musing, with his eyes
on the ground.*)

He sees me not — and yet he dreams
of me.

Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this
fair day?

They are of the best, strong-wing'd
against the wind.

Harold (looking up suddenly, having
caught but the last word). Which
way does it blow?

William. Blowing for England,
ha?

Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy
quarters here.

The winds so cross and jostle among
these towers.

Harold. Count of the Normans,
thou hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertain'd us royally!

William. And thou for us hast
fought as loyally,

Which binds us friendship-fast for
ever!

Harold. Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy.
By too much pressure on it, I would

fain,

Since thou has promised Wulfnoth
home with us,

Be home again with Wulfnoth.

William. Stay — as yet

Thou hast but seen how Norman
hands can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce
touch'd or tasted

The splendors of our Court.

Harold. I am in no mood:
I should be as the shadow of a cloud
Crossing your light.

William. Nay, rest a week or two,
And we will fill thee full of Norman
sun,
And send thee back among thine
island mists
With laughter.

Harold. Count, I thank thee, but
had rather
Breathe the free wind from off our
Saxon downs,
Tho' charged with all the wet of all
the west.

William. Why if thou wilt, so let it
be — thou shalt.

That were a graceless hospitality
To chain the free guest to the banquet-
board;

To-morrow we will ride with thee to
Harfleur,
And see thee shipt, and pray in thy
behalf

For happier homeward winds than
that which crack'd

Thy bark at Ponthieu, — yet to us, in
faith,

A happy one — whereby we came to
know

Thy valor and thy value, noble earl.
Ay, and perchance a happy one for
thee,

Provided — I will go with thee to-
morrow —

Nay — but there be conditions, easy
ones,

So thou, fair friend, will take them
easily.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord, there is a post from
over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*]

William. Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Exeunt Count William and Malet.*]

Harold. Conditions? What condi-
tions? pay him back

His ransom? "easy" — that were
easy — nay —

No money-lover he! What said the
King?

"I pray you do not go to Normandy."
And fate hath blown me hither, bound
me too

With bitter obligation to the Count —
Have I not fought it out? What did
he mean?

There lodged a gleaming grimness in
his eyes,

Gave his shorn smile the lie. The
walls oppress me,

And yon huge keep that hinders half
the heaven.

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-arms
follows him.*]

Harold (to the Man-at-arms). I need
thee not. Why dost thou fol-
low me?

Man-at-arms. I have the Count's
commands to follow thee.

Harold. What then? Am I in dan-
ger in this court?

Man-at-arms. I cannot tell. I have
the Count's commands.

Harold. Stand out of earshot then,
and keep me still
In eyeshot.

Man-at-arms. Yea, Lord Harold.
[*Withdraws.*]

Harold. And arm'd men
Ever keep watch beside my chamber
door,
And if I walk within the lonely wood,
There is an arm'd man ever glides be-
hind!

(*Enter MALET.*)

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,
watch'd?

See yonder!

[*Pointing to the Man-at-arms.*]

Malet. 'Tis the good Count's care
for thee!

The Normans love thee not, nor thou
the Normans,

Or — so they deem.

Harold. But wherefore is the wind,
Which way soever the vane-arrow
swing,

Not ever fair for England? Why but
now

He said (thou heardest him) that I
must not hence

Save on conditions.

Malet. So in truth he said.

Harold. Malet, thy mother was an
Englishwoman;

There somewhere beats an English
pulse in thee!

Malet. Well — for my mother's
sake I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

Harold. Speak for thy mother's
sake, and tell me true.

Malet. Then for my mother's sake,
and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of
thee,

Obeys the Count's conditions, my good
friend.

Harold. How, Malet, if they be not
honorable!

Malet. Seem to obey them.

Harold. Better die than lie!

Malet. Choose therefore whether
thou wilt have thy conscience
White as a maiden's hand, or whether
England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

Harold. News from England?

Malet. Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd up the Thanes

Against thy brother Tostig's govern-
ance;

And all the North of Humber is one
storm.

Harold. I should be there, Malet, I
should be there!

Malet. And Tostig in his own hall
on suspicion

Hath massacred the Thane that was
his guest,

Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be
more

As villainously slain.

Harold. The wolf! the beast!
Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More?
What more?

What do they say? did Edward know
of this?

Malet. They say, his wife was know-
ing and abetting.

Harold. They say, his wife!—To
marry and have no husband
Makes the wife fool. My God, I
should be there.

I'll hack my way to the sea.

Malet. Thou canst not, Harold;
Our Duke is all between thee and the
sea,

Our Duke is all about thee like a God;
All passes block'd. Obey him, speak
him fair,

For he is only debonair to those
That follow where he leads, but stark
as death

To those that cross him.—Look thou,
here is Wulfnoth!

I leave thee to thy talk with him
alone;

How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad
for home! [*Exit Malet.*]

Harold (*muttering*). Go not to Nor-
mandy—go not to Normandy!

(*Enter WULFNOTH.*)

Poor brother! still a hostage!

Wulfnoth. Yea, and I
Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no
more

Make blush the maiden-white of our
tall cliffs,

Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself
and hover

Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter—never—
save indeed

Thou canst make yield this iron-
mooded Duke

To let me go.

Harold. Why, brother, so he will;
But on conditions. Canst thou guess
at them?

Wulfnoth. Draw nearer,—I was in
the corridor,

I saw him coming with his brother
Odo

The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Harold. They did thee wrong who
made thee hostage; thou

Wast ever fearful.

Wulfnoth. And he spoke—I
heard him—

"This Harold is not of the royal blood,
Can have no right to the crown," and

Odo said,

"Thine is the right, for thine the
might; he is here,

And yonder is thy keep."

Harold. No, Wulfnoth, no,

Wulfnoth. And William laugh'd and
swore that might was right,

Far as he knew in this poor world of
ours—

"Marry, the Saints must go along with
us,

And, brother, we will find a way," said
he—

Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

Harold. Never!

Wulfnoth. Yea, but thou must not
this way answer him.

Harold. Is it not better still to
speak the truth?

Wulfnoth. Not here, or thou wilt
never hence nor I:

For in the racing toward this golden
goal

He turns not right or left, but tram-
ples flat

Whatever thwarts him; hast thou
never heard

His savagery at Alençon,—the town
Hung out raw hides along their walls,

and cried

"Work for the tanner."

Harold. That had anger'd me
Had I been William.

Wulfnoth. Nay, but he had prison-
ers,

He tore their eyes out, sliced their
hands away,

And flung them streaming o'er the
battlements

Upon the heads of those who walk'd
within—

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine
own sake.

Harold. Your Welshman says,
"The Truth against the
World,"

Much more the truth against myself.

Wulfnoth. Thyself?

But for my sake, oh brother! oh! for
my sake!

Harold. Poor Wulfnoth! do they
not entreat thee well?

Wulfnoth. I see the blackness of
my dungeon loom

Across their lamps of revel, and beyond

The merriest murmurs of their banquet clank

The shackles that will bind me to the wall.

Harold. Too fearful still!

Wulfnoth. Oh no, no—speak him fair!

Call it to temporize; and not to lie;
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.
The man that hath to foil a murderous aim

May, surely, play with words.

Harold. Words are the man.
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I lie.

Wulfnoth. Then for thine Edith?

Harold. There thou prick'st me deep.

Wulfnoth. And for our Mother England?

Harold. Deeper still.

Wulfnoth. And deeper still the deep-down oubliette,
Down thirty feet below the smiling day—

In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set,

And the lark sings, the sweet stars come and go,

And men are at their markets, in their fields,

And woo their loves and have forgotten thee;

And thou art upright in thy living grave,

Where there is barely room to shift thy side,

And all thine England hath forgotten thee;

And he our lazy-pious Norman King,
With all his Normans round him once again,

Counts his old beads, and hath forgotten thee.

Harold. Thou art of my blood, and so methinks, my boy,
Thy fears infect me beyond reason.
Peace!

Wulfnoth. And then our fiery Tostig, while thy hands
Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians rise

And hurl him from them,—I have heard the Normans

Count upon this confusion—may he not make

A league with William, so to bring him back?

Harold. That lies within the shadow of the chance.

Wulfnoth. And like a river in flood thro' a burst dam

Descends the ruthless Norman—our good King

Kneels mumbling some old bone—our helpless folk

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own blood—

Harold. Wailing! not warring? Boy, thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.

Wulfnoth. Then our modest women—

I know the Norman license—thine own Edith—

Harold. No more! I will not hear thee—William comes.

Wulfnoth. I dare not well be seen in talk with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake with thee.

[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*]

Enter WILLIAM, MALET, and Officer.

Officer. We have the man that rail'd against thy birth.

William. Tear out his tongue.

Officer. He shall not rail again.
He said that he should see confusion fall

On thee and on thine house.

William. Tear out his eyes,
And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.
[*Exit Officer.*]

William. Look not amazed, fair earl! Better leave undone

Than do by halves—tongueless and eyeless, prison'd—

Harold. Better methinks have slain the man at once!

William. We have respect for man's immortal soul,

We seldom take man's life, except in war;

It frights the traitor more to maim and blind.

Harold. In mine own land I should have scorn'd the man,

Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.

William. And let him go? To slander thee again!

Yet in thine own land in thy father's day

They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred—ay,

Some said it was thy father's deed.

Harold. They lied.

William. But thou and he—whom at thy word, for thou

Art known a speaker of the truth, I free

From this foul charge—

Harold. Nay, nay, he freed himself
By oath and compurgation from the charge.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd him of it.

William. But thou and he drove our good Normans out From England, and this rankles in us yet.

Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with life.

Harold. Archbishop Robert! Robert the Archbishop!

Robert of Jumiéges, he that —

Malet. Quiet! quiet!

Harold. Count! if there sat within the Norman chair

A ruler all for England — one who fill'd

All offices, all bishopricks with English —

We could not move from Dover to the Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishopricks — I say

Ye would applaud that Norman who should drive

The stranger to the fiends!

William. Why, that is reason! Warrior thou art, and mighty wise withal!

Ay, ay, but many among our Norman lords

Hate thee for this, and press upon me — saying

God and the sea have given thee to our hands —

To plunge thee into life-long prison here: —

Yet I hold out against them, as I may,

Yea — would hold out, yea, tho' they should revolt —

For thou hast done the battle in my cause;

I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

Harold. I am doubly bound to thee . . . if this be so.

William. And I would bind thee more, and would myself

Be bounden to thee more.

Harold. Then let me hence With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

William. So we will. We hear he hath not long to live.

Harold. It may be.

William. Why then the heir of England, who is he?

Harold. The Atheling is nearest to the throne.

William. But sickly, slight, half-witted and a child,

Will England have him king?

Harold. It may be, no.

William. And hath King Edward not pronounced his heir?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. When he was here in Normandy,

He loved us and we him, because we found him

A Norman of the Normans.

Harold. So did we.

William. A gentle, gracious, pure and saintly man!

And grateful to the hand that shielded him,

He promised that if ever he were king

In England, he would give his kingly voice

To me as his successor. Knowest thou this?

Harold. I learn it now.

William. Thou knowest I am

his cousin, And that my wife descends from Alfred?

Harold. Ay.

William. Who hath a better claim then to the crown

So that ye will not crown the Atheling?

Harold. None that I know . . . if that but hung upon

King Edward's will.

William. Wilt thou uphold my claim?

Malet (aside to Harold). Be careful of thine answer, my good friend.

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Oh! Harold, for my sake and for thine own!

Harold. Ay . . . if the king have not revoked his promise.

William. But hath he done it then?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. Good, good, and thou wilt help me to the crown?

Harold. Ay . . . if the Witan will consent to this.

William. Thou art the mightiest voice in England, man,

Thy voice will lead the Witan — shall I have it?

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Oh! Harold, if thou love thine Edith, ay.

Harold. Ay, if —

Malet (aside to Harold). Thine "ifs" will sear thine eyes out — ay.

William. I ask thee, wilt thou help me to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl of Earls,

Foremost in England and in Normandy;

Thou shalt be verily king — all but the name —

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;

And thou be my vice-king in England. Speak.

Wulfnoth (*aside to Harold*). Ay, brother—for the sake of England—ay.

Harold. My lord—

Malet (*aside to Harold*). Take heed now.

Harold. Ay.

William. I am content,
For thou art truthful, and thy word thy bond.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to Harfleur. [*Exit William.*]

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one life with thee,

And even as I should bless thee saving mine,

I thank thee now for having saved thyself. [*Exit Malet.*]

Harold. For having lost myself to save myself,

Said “ay” when I meant “no,” lied like a lad

That dreads the pendent scourge, said “ay” for “no”!

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an oath—

Is “ay” an oath? is “ay” strong as an oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word As break mine oath? He call’d my word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar, And makes me believe that he believes my word—

The crime he on his head—not bounden—no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, discovering in an inner hall COUNT WILLIAM in his state robes, seated upon his throne, between two Bishops, ODO of BAYEUX being one: in the centre of the hall an ark covered with cloth of gold; and on either side of it the Norman barons.*]

Enter a JAILOR before William’s throne.

William (*to Jailor*). Knave, hast let thy prisoner scape?

Jailor. Sir Count, He had but one foot, he must have hopt away,

Yea, some familiar spirit must have help’d him.

William. Woe knave to thy familiar and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*]
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait my will.

[*The Jailor stands aside.*]

William (*to Harold*). Hast thou such trustless jailors in thy North?

Harold. We have few prisoners in mine earldom there,
So less chance for false keepers.

William.

We have heard Of thy just, mild, and equal governance;

Honor to thee! thou art perfect in all honor!

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it now

Before our gather’d Norman baronage,
For they will not believe me—as I believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands by the ark.*]

Let all men here bear witness of our bond!

[*Beckons to Harold, who advances.*]

Enter MALET behind him.

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this!

Harold. What should I swear? Why should I swear on this?

William (*savagely*). Swear thou to help me to the crown of England.

Malet (*whispering Harold*). My friend, thou hast gone too far to palter now.

Wulfnoth (*whispering Harold*). Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

Harold. I swear to help thee to the crown of England . . . According as King Edward promises.

William. Thou must swear absolutely, noble Earl.

Malet (*whispering*). Delay is death to thee, ruin to England.

Wulfnoth (*whispering*). Swear, dearest brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (*putting his hand on the jewel*). I swear to help thee to the crown of England.

William. Thanks, truthful Earl; I did not doubt thy word,
But that my barons might believe thy word,

And that the Holy Saints of Normandy When thou art home in England, with thine own,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy word,

I made thee swear.—Show him by whom he hath sworn.

[*The two Bishops advance, and raise the cloth of gold. The bodies and bones of Saints are seen lying in the ark.*]

The holy bones of all the Canonized From all the holiest shrines in Normandy!

Harold. Horrible! [*They let the cloth fall again.*]

William. Ay, for thou hast sworn
 an oath
 Which, if not kept, would make the
 hard earth rive
 To the very Devil's horns, the bright
 sky cleave
 To the very feet of God, and send her
 hosts
 Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of
 plague
 Thro' all your cities, blast your in-
 fants, dash
 The torch of war among your standing
 corn,
 Dabble your hearths with your own
 blood. — Enough!
 Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count
 — the King —
 Thy friend — am grateful for thine
 honest oath,
 Not coming fiercely like a conqueror,
 now,
 But softly as a bridegroom to his
 own.
 For I shall rule according to your
 laws,
 And make your ever-jarring Earldoms
 move
 To music and in order — Angle, Jute,
 Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a
 throne
 Out-towering hers of France . . . The
 wind is fair
 For England now . . . To-night we
 will be merry.
 To-morrow will I ride with thee to
 Harfleur.
*[Exeunt William and all the Nor-
 man barons, etc.]*
Harold. To-night we will be merry
 — and to-morrow —
 Juggler and bastard — bastard — he
 hates that most —
 William the tanner's bastard! Would
 he heard me!
 O God, that I were in some wide,
 waste field
 With nothing but my battle-axe and
 him
 To spatter his brains! Why let earth
 rive, gulf in
 These cursed Normans — yea and
 mine own self.
 Cleave, heaven, and send thy saints
 that I may say
 Ev'n to their faces, "If ye side with
 William
 Ye are not noble." How their pointed
 fingers
 Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold,
 son
 Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch
 mine arms,
 My limbs — they are not mine — they
 are a liar's —
 I mean to be a liar — I am not bound —

Stigand shall give me absolution for
 it —
 Did the chest move? did it move?
 I am utter craven!
 O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou
 hast betray'd me!
Wulfnoth. Forgive me, brother, I
 will live here and die.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits
 thee at the banquet.
Harold. Where they eat dead men's
 flesh, and drink their blood.
Page. My lord —
Harold. I know your Norman
 cookery is so spiced,
 It masks all this.
Page. My lord! thou art white
 as death.
Harold. With looking on the dead.
 Am I so white?
 Thy Duke will seem the darker.
 Hence, I follow. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — THE KING'S PALACE. LONDON.

*KING EDWARD dying on a couch, and
 by him standing the QUEEN, HAROLD,
 ARCHBISHOP STIGAND, GURTH,
 LEOFWIN, ARCHBISHOP ALDRED,
 ALDWYTH, and EDITH.*

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there?
 If this be death,
 Then our great Council wait to crown
 thee King —
 Come hither, I have a power;
[To Harold.]
 They call me near, for I am close to
 thee
 And England — I, old shrivell'd
 Stigand, I,
 Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead
 tree,
 I have a power!
 See here this little key about my neck!
 There lies a treasure buried down in
 Ely:
 If e'er the Norman grow too hard for
 thee,
 Ask me for this at thy most need,
 son Harold,
 At thy most need — not sooner.
Harold. So I will.
Stigand. Red gold — a hundred
 purses — yea, and more!
 If thou canst make a wholesome use
 of these
 To think against the Norman, I do
 believe

My old crook'd spine would bud out
two young wings
To fly to heaven straight with.

Harold. Thank thee, father!
Thou art English, Edward too is Eng-
lish now,
He hath clean repented of his Nor-
manism.

Stigand. Ay, as the libertine re-
pents who cannot
Make done undone, when thro' his
dying sense
Shrills "lost thro' thee." They have
built their castles here;
Our priories are Norman; the Norman
adder
Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our
dear England
Is demi-Norman. He!—

[*Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.*

Harold. I would I were
As holy and as passionless as he!
That I might rest as calmly! Look
at him —
The rosy face, and long down-silver-
ing beard,
The brows unwrinkled as a summer
mere. —

Stigand. A summer mere with sud-
den wreckful gusts
From a side-gorge. Passionless? How
he flamed
When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung
him, nay,
He fain had calcined all Northumbria
To one black ash, but that thy patriot
passion
Siding with our great Council against
Tostig,
Outpassion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, for-
sooth,
A conscience for his own soul, not his
realm;
A twilight conscience lighted thro' a
chink;
Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun
to be,
When all the world hath learnt to
speak the truth,
And lying were self-murder by that
state

Which was the exception.

Harold. That sun may God speed!

Stigand. Come, Harold, shake the
cloud off!

Harold. Can I, father?
Our Tostig parted cursing me and
England;
Our sister hates us for his banish-
ment;
He hath gone to kindle Norway against
England,
And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.
For when I rode with William down
to Harfleur,

"Wulfnoth is sick," he said; "he
cannot follow;"

Then with that friendly-fiendly smile
of his,

"We have learnt to love him, let him
a little longer

Remain a hostage for the loyalty
Of Godwin's house." As far as
touches Wulfnoth

I that so prized plain word and naked
truth

Have sinn'd against it — all in vain.

Leofwin. Good brother,
By all the truths that ever priest hath
preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have
lied,

Thine is the pardonablest.

Harold. May be so!
I think it so, I think I am a fool

To think it can be otherwise than so.

Stigand. Tut, tut, I have absolved
thee: dost thou scorn me,
Because I had my Canterbury pallium
From one whom they disposed?

Harold. No, Stigand, no!

Stigand. Is naked truth actable in
true life?

I have heard a saying of thy father
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly
true,

Men would but take him for the
craftier liar.

Leofwin. Be men less delicate than
the Devil himself?

I thought that naked Truth would
shame the Devil

The Devil is so modest.

Gurth. He never said it!

Leofwin. Be thou not stupid-honest,
brother Gurth!

Harold. Better to be a liar's dog,
and hold

My master honest, than believe that
lying

And ruling men are fatal twins that
cannot

Move one without the other. Ed-
ward wakes! —

Dazed — he hath seen a vision.

Edward. The green tree!
Then a great Angel past along the
highest

Crying "the doom of England," and
at once

He stood beside me, in his grasp a
sword

Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft
the tree

From off the bearing trunk, and
hurl'd it from him

Three fields away, and then he dash'd
and drench'd,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with
human blood,

And brought the sunder'd tree again,
and set it
Straight on the trunk, that thus bap-
tized in blood
Grew ever high and higher, beyond
my seeing,
And shot out sidelong boughs across
the deep
That dropt themselves, and rooted in
far isles
Beyond my seeing: and the great
Angel rose
And past again along the highest cry-
ing
"The doom of England!" — Tostig,
raise my head!

[Falls back senseless.
Harold (raising him). Let Harold
serve for Tostig!

Queen. Harold served
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tos-
tig!
Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid
it low!
The sickness of our saintly king, for
whom
My prayers go up as fast as my tears
fall,
I well believe, hath mainly drawn it-
self
From lack of Tostig — thou hast ban-
ish'd him.

Harold. Nay — but the council, and
the king himself.

Queen. Thou hatest him, hatest
him.

Harold (coldly). Ay — Stigand,
unriddle

This vision, canst thou?

Stigand. Dotage!

Edward (starting up). It is finish'd.
I have built the Lord a house — the
Lord hath dwelt
In darkness. I have built the Lord a
house —
Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden
cherubim
With twenty-cubit wings from wall to
wall —
I have built the Lord a house — sing,
Asaph! clash
The cymbal, Heman! blow the trum-
pet, priest!
Fall, cloud, and fill the house — lo!
my two pillars,
Jachin and Boaz! —

[Seeing Harold and Gurth.
Harold, Gurth, — where am I?
Where is the charter of our Westmin-
ster?

Stigand. It lies beside thee, king,
upon thy bed.

Edward. Sign, sign at once — take,
sign it, Stigand, Aldred!

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth,
and Leofwin,

Sign it, my queen!

All. We have sign'd it.

Edward. It is finish'd!
The kingliest Abbey in all Christian
lands,
The lordliest, loftiest minster ever
built

To Holy Peter in our English isle!
Let me be buried there, and all our
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy
men

That shall be born hereafter. It is
finish'd!

Hast thou had absolution for thine
oath? [To Harold.

Harold. Stigand hath given me
absolution for it.

Edward. Stigand is not canonical
enough

To save thee from the wrath of Nor-
man Saints.

Stigand. Norman enough! Be
there no Saints of England

To help us from their brethren yonder?

Edward. Prelate,

The Saints are one, but those of Nor-
manland

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of
Aldred. [To Harold.

Aldred. It shall be granted him,
my king; for he

Who vows a vow to strangle his own
mother

Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking
it.

Edward. O friends, I shall not over-
live the day.

Stigand. Why then the throne is
empty. Who inherits?

For tho' we be not bound by the king's
voice

In making of a king, yet the king's
voice

Is much toward his making. Who
inherits?

Edgar the Atheling?

Edward. No, no, but Harold.

I love him: he hath served me: none
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse
is on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed
bones;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

Harold. Not mean

To make our England Norman.

Edward. There spake Godwin,
Who hated all the Normans; but their
Saints

Have heard thee, Harold.

Edith. Oh! my lord, my king!

He knew not whom he swore by.

Edward. Yea, I know

He knew not, but those heavenly ears
have heard,

Their curse is on him; wilt thou bring another,

Edith, upon his head?

Edith. No, no, not I.

Edward. Why then, thou must not wed him.

Harold. Wherefore, wherefore?

Edward. O son, when thou didst tell me of thine oath,

I sorrow'd for my random promise given

To yon fox-lion. I did not dream then

I should be king. — My son, the Saints are virgins;

They love the white rose of virginity, The cold, white lily blowing in her cell:

I have been myself a virgin; and I swear

To consecrate my virgin here to heaven —

The silent, cloister'd, solitary life, A life of life-long prayer against the

curse That lies on thee and England.

Harold. No, no, no.

Edward. Treble denial of the tongue of flesh,

Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt have

To wait for it like Peter. O my son! Are all oaths to be broken then, all

promises Made in our agony for help from

heaven?

Son, there is one who loves thee: and a wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable

In all, obedience, as mine own hath been:

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the Queen's head.*

Queen. Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the rest,

My banish'd Tostig.

Edward. All the sweet Saints bless him!

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he comes!

And let him pass unscathed; he loves me, Harold!

Be kindly to the Normans left among us,

Who follow'd me for love! and dear son, swear

When thou art king, to see my solemn vow

Accomplish'd.

Harold. Nay, dear lord, for I have sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

Edward. Thou wilt not swear?

Harold. I cannot.

Edward. Then on thee remains the curse,

Harold, if thou embrace her: and on thee,

Edith, if thou abide it, —

[*The King swoons; Edith falls and kneels by the couch.*

Stigand. He hath swoon'd! Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

Harold. Look up! look up! Edith!

Aldred. Confuse her not; she hath begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Aldwyth. O noble Harold, I would thou couldst have sworn.

Harold. For thine own pleasure?

Aldwyth. No, but to please our dying king, and those

Who make thy good their own — all England, Earl.

Aldred. I would thou couldst have sworn. Our holy king

Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy Church

To save thee from the curse.

Harold. Alas! poor man, His promise brought it on me.

Aldred. O good son! That knowledge made him all the careful

To find a means whereby the curse might glance

From thee and England.

Harold. Father, we so loved —

Aldred. The more the love, the mightier is the prayer;

The more the love, the more acceptable

The sacrifice of both your loves to heaven.

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from heaven;

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the king

Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and seen

A shadowing horror; there are signs in heaven —

Harold. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth! Knowest thou Senlac hill?

Harold. I know all Sussex; A good entrenchment for a perilous hour!

Aldred. Pray God that come not suddenly! There is one

Who passing by that hill three nights ago —

He shook so that he scarce could out with it —

Heard, heard —

Harold. The wind in his hair?

Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-
hymns,
And cries, and clashes, and the groans
of men;
And dreadful shadows strove upon
the hill,
And dreadful lights crept up from out
the marsh—
Corpse-candles gliding over nameless
graves—

Harold. At Senlac?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edward (waking). Senlac! Sanguelac,

The Lake of Blood!

Stigand. This lightning before
death

Plays on the word, — and Normanizes
too!

Harold. Hush, father, hush!

Edward. Thou uncanonical fool,
Wilt thou play with the thunder?

North and South

Thunder together, showers of blood
are blown

Before a never ending blast, and
hiss

Against the blaze they cannot quench
— a lake,

A sea of blood — we are drown'd in
blood — for God

Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has
drawn the bow —

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the
arrow! [*Dies.*]

Stigand. It is the arrow of death in
his own heart —

And our great Council wait to crown
thee King.

SCENE II. — IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,
crown'd King — and lost to me!

(*Singing.*)

Two young lovers in winter weather,

None to guide them,

Walk'd at night on the misty heather;

Night, as black as a raven's feather;

Both were lost and found together,

None beside them.

That is the burthen of it — lost and
found

Together in the cruel river Swale

A hundred years ago; and there's
another,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

"I am beside thee."

Lost, lost, we have lost the way.

"Love, I will guide thee."

Whither, O whither? into the river,
Where we two may be lost together,
And lost forever? "Oh! never, oh!
never,

Tho' we be lost and be found to-
gether."

Some think they loved within the pale
forbidden

By Holy Church: but who shall say?
the truth

Was lost in that fierce North, where
they were lost,

Where all good things are lost, where
Tostig lost

The good hearts of his people. It is
Harold!

(*Enter HAROLD.*)

Harold the King!

Harold. Call me not King,
but Harold.

Edith. Nay, thou art King!

Harold. Thine, thine, or King
or churl!

My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and com-
mand

That kiss my due when subject, which
will make

My kingship kinglier to me than to
reign

King of the world without it.

Edith. Ask me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second
curse

Descend upon thine head, and thou
be only

King of the moment over England.

Harold. Edith,
Tho' somewhat less a king to my true
self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I
have lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro'
mine oath,

Yet thee I would not lose, and sell
not thou

Our living passion for a dead man's
dream;

Stigand believed he knew not what he
spake.

Oh God! I cannot help it, but at
times

They seem to me too narrow, all the
faiths

Of this grown world of ours, whose
baby eye

Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise,
I fear

This curse, and scorn it. But a little
light! —

And on it falls the shadow of the
priest;

Heaven yield us more! for better,
Woden, all

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim
Walhalla,

Eternal war, than that the Saints at
peace

The Holiest of our Holiest one should
be

This William's fellow-tricksters;—
better die

Than credit this, for death is death,
or else

Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—
thou art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in

my kiss,
And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not.

Harold. Scared by the church—
"Love for a whole life long"

When was that sung?

Edith. Here to the nightingales.

Harold. Their anthems of no
church, how sweet they are!

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to
cross

Their billings ere they nest.

Edith. They are but of spring,

They fly the winter change—not so
with us—

No wings to come and go.

Harold. But wing'd souls flying

Beyond all change and in the eternal
distance

To settle on the Truth.

Edith. They are not so true,

They change their mates.

Harold. Do they? I did not know
it.

Edith. They say thou art to wed
the Lady Aldwyth.

Harold. They say, they say.

Edith. If this be politic,

And well for thee and England—and
for her—

Care not for me who love thee.

Gurth (calling). Harold, Harold!

Harold. The voice of Gurth! (*Enter*
GURTH.) Good even, my good
brother!

Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.

Edith. Good even, Gurth.

Gurth. Ill news hath come! Our
hapless brother, Tostig—

He, and the giant King of Norway,
Harold

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Ice-
land, Orkney,

Are landed North of Humber, and in
a field

So packed with carnage that the dykes
and brooks

Were bridged and damm'd with dead,
have overthrown

Morcar and Edwin.

Harold. Well then, we must
fight.

How blows the wind?

Gurth. Against St. Valery
And William.

Harold. Well then, we will to the
North.

Gurth. Ay, but worse news: this
William sent to Rome,

Swearing thou swarest falsely by his
Saints:

The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-
brand

His master, heard him, and have sent
him back

A holy gonfalon, and a blessed hair
Of Peter, and all France, all Bur-

gundy,

Poitou, all Christendom is raised
against thee;

He hath cursed thee, and all those
who fight for thee,

And given thy realm of England to
the bastard.

Harold. Ha! ha!

Edith. Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange
and ghastly in the gloom

And shadowing of this double thun-
der-cloud

That lours on England—laughter!

Harold. No, not strange!
This was old human laughter in old

Rome

Before a Pope was born, when that
which reign'd

Call'd itself God.—A kindly render-
ing

Of "Render unto Cæsar." . . . The
Good Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.

Gurth. They have taken York.

Harold. The Lord was God and
came as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York
taken?

Gurth. Yea, Tostig hath taken
York!

Harold. To York then. Edith,
Hadst thou been braver, I had better

braved

All—but I love thee and thou me—
and that

Remains beyond all chances and all
churches,

And that thou knowest.

Edith. Ay, but take back thy ring.

It burns my hand—a curse to thee
and me.

I dare not wear it.

[*Proffers Harold the ring, which he takes.*

Harold. But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*

Edith. The King hath cursed him,

if he marry me;

The Pope hath cursed him, marry me
or no!

God help me! I know nothing — can
but pray
For Harold — pray, pray, pray — no
help but prayer,
A breath that fleets beyond this iron
world,
And touches Him that made it.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — IN NORTHUMBRIA.

ARCHBISHOP ALDRED, MORCAR, EDWIN, and FORCES. *Enter HAROLD. The standard of the golden Dragon of Wessex preceding him.*

Harold. What! are thy people sullen from defeat?

Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the Humber,

No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king Believe us sullen — only shamed to the quick

Before the king — as having been so bruised

By Harold, king of Norway; but our help

Is Harold, king of England. Pardon us, thou!

Our silence is our reverence for the king!

Harold. Earl of the Mercians! if the truth be gall,

Cram me not thou with honey, when our good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

Harold. Why cry thy people on thy sister's name?

Morcar. She hath won upon our people thro' her beauty, And pleasantness among them.

Voices. Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

Harold. They shout as they would have her for a queen.

Morcar. She hath followed with our host, and suffer'd all.

Harold. What would ye, men?

Voice. Our old Northumbrian

crown,

And kings of our own choosing.

Harold. Your old crown

Were little help without our Saxon carles

Against Hardrada.

Voice. Little! we are Danes, Who conquer'd what we walk on, our own field.

Harold. They have been plotting here! [*Aside.*]

Voice. He calls us little!

Harold. The kingdoms of this world began with little,

A hill, a fort, a city — that reach'd a hand

Down to the field beneath it, "Be thou mine,"

Then to the next, "Thou also!" If the field

Cried out "I am mine own;" another hill

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first Fell, and the next became an Empire.

Voice. Yet

Thou art but a West Saxon: we are Danes!

Harold. My mother is a Dane, and I am English;

There is a pleasant fable in old books, Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a score

All in one faggot, snap it over knee, Ye cannot.

Voice. Hear King Harold! he says true!

Harold. Would ye be Norsemen?

Voices. No!

Harold. Or Norman?

Voices. No!

Harold. Snap not the faggot-band then.

Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ah, but thou art not kingly, only grandson

To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

Harold. This old Wulfnoth

Would take me on his knees and tell me tales

Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great Who drove you Danes; and yet he

held that Dane, Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should

be all One England, for this cow-herd, like my father,

Who shook the Norman scoundrels off the throne,

Had in him kingly thoughts — a king of men,

Not made but born, like the great king of all,

A light among the oxen.

Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ah, and I love him now, for mine own father

Was great, and cobbled.

Voice. Thou art Tostig's brother,

Who wastes the land.

Harold. This brother comes to save Your land from waste; I saved it

once before, For when your people banish'd Tostig

hence, And Edward would have sent a host

against you, Then I, who loved my brother, bade the king

Who doted on him, sanction your decree

Of Tostig's banishment, and choice
of Morcar,

To help the realm from scattering.

Voice. King! thy brother,
If one may dare to speak the truth,
was wrong'd.

Wild was he, born so: but the plots
against him

Had madden'd tamer men.

Morcar. Thou art one of those
Who brake into Lord Tostig's treas-
ure-house

And slew two hundred of his following,
And now, when Tostig hath come back
with power,

Are frightened back to Tostig.

Old Thane. Ugh! Plots and feuds!
This is my ninetieth birthday. Can
ye not

Be brethren? Godwin still at feud
with Alfgar,

And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots
and feuds!

This is my ninetieth birthday!

Harold. Old man, Harold
Hates nothing; not *his* fault, if our
two houses

Be less than brothers.

Voices. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!

Harold. Again! Morcar! Edwin!
What do they mean?

Edwin. So the good king would
deign to lend an ear

Not over scornful, we might chance —
perchance —

To guess their meaning.

Morcar. Thine own meaning, Har-
old,

To make all England one, to close all
feuds,

Mixing our bloods, that thence a king
may rise

Half-Godwin and half-Alfgar, one to
rule

All England beyond question, beyond
quarrel.

Harold. Who sow'd this fancy here
among the people?

Morcar. Who knows what sows
itself among the people?

A goodly flower at times.

Harold. The Queen of Wales?
Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her
To hate me; I have heard she hates
me.

Morcar. No!
For I can swear to that, but cannot
swear

That these will follow thee against
the Norsemen,

If thou deny them this.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin,
When will ye cease to plot against
my house?

Edwin. The king can scarcely
dream that we, who know

His prowess in the mountains of the
West,

Should care to plot against him in
the North.

Morcar. Who dares arraign us,
king, of such a plot?

Harold. Ye heard one witness even
now.

Morcar. The craven!
There is a faction risen again for
Tostig,

Since Tostig came with Norway —
fright not love.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye,
if I yield,

Follow against the Norseman?

Morcar. Surely, surely!

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye
upon oath,

Help us against the Norman?

Morcar. With good will;
Yea, take the Sacrament upon it,
king.

Harold. Where is thy sister?

Morcar. Somewhere hard at hand.
Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.*]

Harold. Idoubt not but thou knowest
Why thou art summon'd.

Aldwyth. Why? — I stay with these,
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out
alone,

And flay me all alive.

Harold. Canst thou love one
Who did discrown thine husband, un-
queen thee?

Didst thou not love thine husband?

Aldwyth. Oh! my lord,
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage
king —

That was, my lord, a match of policy.

Harold. Was it?

I knew him brave: he loved his land:
he fain

Had made her great: his finger on her
harp

(I heard him more than once) had in
it Wales,

Her floods, her woods, her hills: had
I been his,

I had been all Welsh.

Aldwyth. Oh, ay — all Welsh —
and yet

I saw thee drive him up his hills —
and women

Cling to the conquer'd, if they love,
the more,

If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
We never — oh! good Morcar, speak
for us,

His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth.

Harold. Goodly news!

Morcar. Doubt it not thou! Since
Griffyth's head was sent

To Edward, she hath said it.

Harold. I had rather

She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth,
Canst thou love me, thou knowing
where I love ?

Aldwyth. I can, my lord, for mine
own sake, for thine,
For England, for thy poor white dove,
who flutters
Between thee and the porch, but then
would find
Her nest within the cloister, and be
still.

Harold. Canst thou love one, who
cannot love again ?

Aldwyth. Full hope have I that love
will answer love.

Harold. Then in the name of the
great God, so be it !
Come, Aldred, join our hands before
the hosts,
That all may see.

[*Aldred joins the hands of Harold
and Aldwyth and blesses them.*]

Voices. Harold, Harold and Ald-
wyth !

Harold. Set forth our golden Dra-
gon, let him flap
The wings that beat down Wales !
Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
Dark among gems and gold ; and
thou, brave banner,
Blaze like a night of fatal stars on
those

Who read their doom and die.
Where lie the Norsemen ? on the
Derwent ? ay

At Stamford-bridge.
Morcar, collect thy men ; Edwin, my
friend —

Thou lingerest. — Gurth, —
Last night King Edward came to me
in dreams —

The rosy face and long down-silvering
beard —

He told me I should conquer : —
I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(*To his army.*)

Last night King Edward came to me
in dreams,

And told me we should conquer.

Voices. Forward ! Forward !

Harold and Holy Cross !

Aldwyth. The day is won !

SCENE II. — A PLAIN. BEFORE THE
BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.

HAROLD and his Guard.

Harold. Who is it comes this way ?

Tostig ? (*Enter Tostig with a
small force.*) O brother,
What art thou doing here ?

Tostig. I am foraging
For Norway's army.

Harold. I could take and slay thee.
Thou art in arms against us.

Tostig. Take and slay me,
For Edward loved me.

Harold. Edward bade me spare
thee.

Tostig. I hate King Edward, for he
join'd with thee
To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay
me, I say,
Or I shall count thee fool.

Harold. Take thee, or free thee,
Free thee or slay thee, Norway will
have war ;

No man would strike with Tostig, save
for Norway.

Thou art nothing in thine England,
save for Norway,

Who loves not thee but war. What
dost thou here,

Trampling thy mother's bosom into
blood ?

Tostig. She hath wean'd me from
it with such bitterness.

I come for mine own Earldom, my
Northumbria ;

Thou hast given it to the enemy of
our house.

Harold. Northumbria threw thee
off, she will not have thee,
Thou hast misused her : and, O crown-
ing crime !

Hast murder'd thine own guest, the
son of Orm,
Gamel, at thine own hearth.

Tostig. The slow, fat fool !
He draw'd and prated so, I smote
him suddenly,

I knew not what I did. He held with
Morcar. —

I hate myself for all things that I
do.

Harold. And Morcar holds with
us. Come back with him.

Know what thou dost ; and we may
find for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banish-
ment,

Some easier earldom.

Tostig. What for Norway then ?
He looks for land among us, he and
his.

Harold. Seven feet of English land,
or something more,

Seeing he is a giant.

Tostig. That is noble !

That sounds of Godwin.

Harold. Come thou back, and be
Once more a son of Godwin.

Tostig (*turns away*). O brother,
brother,

O Harold —

Harold (*laying his hand on Tostig's
shoulder*). Nay then, come thou
back to us !

Tostig (*after a pause turning to him*).
Never shall any man say that I,
that Tostig

Conjured the mightier Harold from
his North
To do the battle for me here in Eng-
land,
Then left him for the meaner!
thee!—
Thou hast no passion for the House
of Godwin—
Thou hast but cared to make thyself
a king—
Thou hast sold me for a cry.—
Thou gavest thy voice against me in
the Council—
I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy
thee.
Farewell for ever! *[Exit.*
Harold. On to Stamford-bridge!

SCENE. III.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-
BRIDGE. BANQUET.

HAROLD and ALDWYTH. GURTH,
LEOFWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, and
other Earls and Thanes.

Voices. Hail! Harold! Aldwyth!
hail, bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth (talking with Harold). An-
swer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would
the wines

Of wedding had been dash'd into the
cups

Of victory, and our marriage and thy
glory

Been drunk together! these poor
hands but sew,

Spin, broider—would that they were
man's to have held

The battle-axe by thee!

Harold. There was a moment
When being forced aloof from all my
guard,

And striking at Hardrada and his
madmen

I had wish'd for any weapon.

Aldwyth. Why art thou sad?

Harold. I have lost the boy who
play'd at ball with me,
With whom I fought another fight
than this

Of Stamford-bridge.

Aldwyth. Ay! ay! thy victories
Over our own poor Wales, when at
thy side

He conquer'd with thee.

Harold. No—the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

Aldwyth. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norse-
men hence?

Thy fierce forekings had clench'd
their pirate hides

To the bleak church doors, like kites
upon a barn.

Harold. Is there so great a need to
tell thee why?

Aldwyth. Yea, am I not thy wife?

Voices. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth!
Bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth. Answer them!

[To Harold.

Harold (to all). Earls and Thanes!
Full thanks for your fair greeting of
my bride!

Earls, Thanes, and all our country-
men! the day,

Our day beside the Derwent will not
shine

Less than a star among the goldenest
hours

Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who
coming Dane

Died English. Every man about his
king

Fought like a king; the king like his
own man,

No better; one for all, and all for
one,

One soul! and therefore have we shat-
ter'd back

The hugest wave from Norseland ever
yet

Surged on us, and our battle-axes
broken

The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his
carrion croak

From the gray sea for ever. Many
are gone—

Drink to the dead who died for us, the
living

Who fought and would have died, but
happier lived,

If happier be to live; they both have
life

In the large mouth of England, till
her voice

Die with the world. Hail—hail!

Morcar. May all invaders perish
like Hardrada!

All traitors fail like Tostig!

[All drink but Harold.

Aldwyth. Thy cup's full!

Harold. I saw the hand of Tostig
cover it.

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,
him

Reverently we buried. Friends, had
I been here,

Without too large self-lauding I must
hold

The sequel had been other than his
league

With Norway, and this battle. Peace
be with him!

He was not of the worst. If there be
those

At banquet in this hall, and hearing
me —

For there be those I fear who prick'd
the lion

To make him spring, that sight of
Danish blood

Might serve an end not English —
peace with them

Likewise, if they can be at peace with
what

God gave us to divide us from the
wolf!

Aldwyth (aside to Harold). Make
not our Morcar sullen: it is not
wise.

Harold. Hail to the living who
fought, the dead who fell!

Voices. Hail, hail!

First Thane. How ran that answer
which King Harold gave

To his dead namesake, when he ask'd
for England?

Leofwin. "Seven feet of English
earth, or something more,
Seeing he is a giant!"

First Thane. Then for the bastard
Six feet and nothing more!

Leofwin. Ay, but belike
Thou hast not learnt his measure.

First Thane. By St. Edmund
I over-measure him. Sound sleep to
the man

Here by dead Norway without dream
or dawn!

Second Thane. What is he brag-
ging still that he will come
To thrust our Harold's throne from
under him?

My nurse would tell me of a molehill
crying

To a mountain "Stand aside and room
for me!"

First Thane. Let him come! let him
come. Here's to him, sink or
swim! [*Drinks.*]

Second Thane. God sink him!

First Thane. Cannot hands which
had the strength

To shove that stranded iceberg off
our shores,

And send the shatter'd North again
to sea,

Scuttle his cockle-shell? What's
Brunanburg

To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and
so hard,

So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.
Thor —

By God, we thought him dead — but
our old Thor

Heard his own thunder again, and
woke and came

Among us again, and mark'd the sons
of those

Who made this Britain England,
break the North:

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,
Heard how the war-born sang,
Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,
Heard how the shield-wall rang,
Iron on iron clang,
Anvil on hammer bang —

Second Thane. Hammer on anvil,
hammer on anvil. Old dog,
Thou art drunk, old dog!

First Thane. Too drunk to fight
with thee!

Second Thane. Fight thou with
thine own double, not with me,
Keep that for Norman William!

First Thane. Down with William!

Third Thane. The washerwoman's
brat!

Fourth Thane. The tanner's bas-
tard!

Fifth Thane. The Falaise byblow!

[*Enter a Thane from Pevensey,*
spatter'd with mud.]

Harold. Ay, but what late guest,
As haggard as a fast of forty days,
And caked and plaster'd with a hun-
dred mires,

Hath stumbled on our cups?

Thane from Pevensey. My lord the
King!

William the Norman, for the wind had
changed —

Harold. I felt it in the middle of
that fierce fight

At Stamford-bridge. William hath
landed, ha?

Thane from Pevensey. Landed at
Pevensey — I am from Peven-
sey —

Hath wasted all the land at Peven-
sey —

Hath harried mine own cattle — God
confound him!

I have ridden night and day from
Pevensey —

A thousand ships — a hundred thou-
sand men —

Thousands of horses, like as many
lions

Neighing and roaring as they leapt to
land —

Harold. How oft in coming hast
thou broken bread?

Thane from Pevensey. Some thrice,
or so.

Harold. Bring not thy hollowness
On our full feast. Famine is fear,
were it but

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down,
and eat,

And, when again red-blooded, speak
again;

(*Aside.*) The men that guarded
England to the South

Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . .

No power mine

To hold their force together. . . .

Many are fallen

At Stamford-bridge . . . the people
stupid-sure

Sleep like their swine . . . in South
and North at once

I could not be.

(*Aloud.*) Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,
Edwin!

(*Pointing to the revellers.*) The curse
of England! these are drown'd
in wassail,

And cannot see the world but thro'
their wines!

Leave them! and thee too, Aldwyth,
must I leave—

Harsh is the news! hard is our honey-
moon!

Thy pardon. (*Turning round to his
attendants.*) Break the banquet
up . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black
news,

Cram thy crop full, but come when
thou art call'd. [*Exit Harold.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND,
FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE
FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, *sitting*; by him standing HUGH
MARGOT the Monk, GURTH, LEOF-
WIN.

Harold. Refer my cause, my crown
to Rome! . . . The wolf

Mudded the brook and predetermined
all.

Monk,

Thou hast said thy say, and had my
constant "No"

For all but instant battle. I hear no
more.

Margot. Hear me again—for the
last time. Arise,

Scatter thy people home, descend the
hill,

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy
Lord's

And crave his mercy, for the Holy
Father

Hath given this realm of England to
the Norman.

Harold. Then for the last time,
monk, I ask again

When had the Lateran and the Holy
Father

To do with England's choice of her
own king?

Margot. Earl, the first Christian
Cæsar drew to the East

To leave the Pope dominion in the
West.

He gave him all the kingdoms of the
West.

Harold. So!—did he?—Earl—I
have a mind to play

The William with thine eyesight and
thy tongue.

Earl—ay—thou art but but a messen-
ger of William.

I am weary—go: make me not wroth
with thee!

Margot. Mock-king, I am the mes-
senger of God,

His Norman Daniel! Mene, Mene,
Tekel!

Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare
to cry,

Yon heaven is wroth with thee? Hear
me again!

Our Saints have moved the Church
that moves the world,

And all the Heavens and very God:
they heard—

They know King Edward's promise
and thine—thine.

Harold. Should they not know free
England crowns herself?

Not know that he nor I had power to
promise?

Not know that Edward cancell'd his
own promise?

And for *my* part therein—Back to
that juggler, [*Rising.*]

Tell him the Saints are nobler than he
dreams,

Tell him that God is nobler than the
Saints,

And tell him we stand arm'd on Senlac
Hill,

And bide the doom of God.

Margot. Hear it thro' me.

The realm for which thou art forsworn
is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast
is cursed,

The corpse thou whelmest with thine
earth is cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is
cursed,

The seed thou sowest in thy field is
cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy
field is cursed,

The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is
cursed,

And thou, usurper, liar—

Harold. Out, beast monk!

[*Lifting his hand to strike him.*
Gurth stops the blow.]

I ever hated monks.

Margot. I am but a voice

Among you: murder, martyr me if ye
will—

Harold. Thanks, Gurth! The
simple, silent, selfless man

Is worth a world of tonguesters. (*To
Margot.*) Get thee gone!

He means the thing he says. See him
out safe!

Leofwin. He hath blown himself as
red as fire with curses.

An honest fool! Follow me, honest fool,
But if thou blurt thy curse among our
folk,

I know not — I may give that egg-
bald head

The tap that silences.

Harold. See him out safe.

[*Exeunt Leofwin and Margot.*]

Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even
temper, brother Harold!

Harold. Gurth, when I past by
Waltham, my foundation

For men who serve the neighbor, not
themselves,

I cast me down prone, praying; and,
when I rose,

They told me that the Holy Rood had
lean'd

And bow'd above me; whether that
which held it

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself
were bound

To that necessity which binds us down;
Whether it bow'd at all but in their
fancy;

Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin
Or glory, who shall tell? but they
were sad,

And somewhat sadden'd me.

Gurth. Yet if a fear,

Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange
Saints

By whom thou swarest, should have
power to balk

Thy puissance in this fight with him,
who made

And heard thee swear — brother — I
have not sworn —

If the king fall, may not the kingdom
fall?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king;
And, if I win, I win, and thou art king;

Draw thou to London, there make
strength to breast

Whatever chance, but leave this day
to me.

Leofwin (entering). And waste the
land about thee as thou goest,
And be thy hand as winter on the field,
To leave the foe no forage.

Harold. Noble Gurth!

Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall —
The doom of God! How should the
people fight

When the king flies? And, Leofwin,
art thou mad?

How should the King of England
waste the fields

Of England, his own people? — No
glance yet

Of the Northumbrian helmet on the
heath?

Leofwin. No, but a shoal of wives
upon the heath,

And someone saw thy willy-nilly nun
Vying a tress against our golden
fern.

Harold. Vying a tear with our cold
dews, a sigh

With these low-moaning heavens.
Let her be fetch'd.

We have parted from our wife without
reproach,

Tho' we have dived thro' all her prac-
tices;

And that is well.

Leofwin. I saw her even now:
She hath not left us.

Harold. Nought of Morcar then?

Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard; thine,

William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows: belike
he watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough
rolls

Wash up that old crown of Northum-
berland.

Harold. I had married her for
Morcar — a sin against

The truth of love. Evil for good, it
seems,

Is oft as childless of the good as evil
For evil.

Leofwin. Good for good hath borne
at times

A bastard false as William.

Harold. Ay, if Wisdom

Pair'd not with Good. But I am
somewhat worn,

A snatch of sleep were like the peace
of God.

Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about
the hill —

What did the dead man call it — San-
guelac,

The lake of blood?

Leofwin. A lake that dips in Wil-
liam

As well as Harold.

Harold. Like enough. I have seen

The trenches dug, the palisades up-
rear'd

And wattled thick with ash and wil-
low-wands;

Yea, wrought at them myself. Go
round once more;

See all be sound and whole. No Nor-
man horse

Can shatter England, standing shield
by shield;

Tell that again to all.

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Harold. Our guardsman hath but
toil'd his hand and foot,

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some
wine! (*One pours wine into a
goblet which he hands to Harold.*)

Too much!

What? we must use our battle-axe to-day.

Our guardsmen have slept well, since we came in?

Leofwin. Ay, slept and snored. Your second-sighted man

That scared the dying conscience of the king,

Misheard their snores for groans. They are up again

And chanting that old song of Brunan-burg

Where England conquer'd.

Harold. That is well. The Norman, What is he doing?

Leofwin. Praying for Normandy; Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their bells.

Harold. And our old songs are prayers for England too!

But by all Saints —

Leofwin. Barring the Norman!

Harold. Nay, Were the great trumpet blowing doomsday dawn, I needs must rest. Call when the Norman moves —

[*Exeunt all but Harold.*

No horse — thousand of horses — our shield wall —

Wall — break it not — break not — break —

[*Sleeps.*

Vision of Edward. Son Harold, I thy king, who came before

To tell thee thou shouldst win at Stamford-bridge,

Come yet once more, from where I am at peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,

To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac hill —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Wulfnoth. O brother, from my ghastly oubliette

I send my voice across the narrow seas —

No more, no more, dear brother, nevermore —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Tostig. O brother, most unbrotherlike to me,

Thou gavest thy voice against me in my life,

I give my voice against thee from the grave —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Norman Saints. O hapless Harold! King but for an hour!

Thou swarest falsely by our blessed bones,

We give our voice against thee out of heaven!

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow! the arrow!

Harold (*starting up, battle-axe in hand*). Away!

My battle-axe against your voices. Peace!

The king's last word — "the arrow!" I shall die —

I die for England then, who lived for England —

What nobler? men must die. I cannot fall into a falser world —

I have done no man wrong. Tostig, poor brother,

Art thou so anger'd?

Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy hands

Save for thy wild and violent will that wrench'd

All hearts of freemen from thee. I could do

No other than this way advise the king

Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible

That mortal men should bear their earthly heats

Into yon bloodless world, and threaten us thence

Unschool'd of Death? Thus then thou art revenged —

I left our England naked to the South To meet thee in the North. The

Norseman's raid

Hath helpt the Norman, and the race of Godwin

Hath ruin'd Godwin. No — our waking thoughts

Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools

Of sullen slumber, and arise again Disjointed: only dreams — where

mine own self Takes part against myself! Why?

for a spark Of self-disdain born in me when I

sware Falsely to him, the falser Norman, over

His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by whom

I knew not that I sware, — not for myself —

For England — yet not wholly —

(*Enter EDITH.*)

Edith, Edith, Get thou into thy cloister as the king

Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-mongering Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy Church

To break her close! There the great God of truth

Fill all thine hours with peace! — A lying devil

Hath haunted me — mine oath — my wife — I fain

Had made my marriage not a lie; I
 could not:
 Thou art my bride! and thou in after
 years
 Praying perchance for this poor soul
 of mine
 In cold, white cells beneath an icy
 moon—
 This memory to thee!—and this to
 England,
 My legacy of war against the Pope
 From child to child, from Pope to
 Pope, from age to age,
 Till the sea wash her level with her
 shores,
 Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

Aldwyth (to Edith). Away from
 him!

Edith. I will . . . I have not spoken
 to the king
 One word; and one I must. Farewell!

Harold. *[Going.]* Not yet.
 Stay.

Edith. To what use?

Harold. The king commands thee,
 woman!

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their forces
 in?

Aldwyth. Nay, I fear not.

Harold. Then there's no force in
 thee!

Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's
 ear

To part me from the woman that I
 loved!

Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-
 brians!

Thou hast been false to England and
 to me!—

As . . . in some sort . . . I have been
 false to thee.

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both
 sides—go!

Aldwyth. Alas, my lord, I loved thee!

Harold (bitterly). With a love

Passing thy love for Griffyth! where-
 fore now

Obeys my first and last commandment.
 Go!

Aldwyth. O Harold! husband! Shall
 we meet again?

Harold. After the battle—after
 the battle. Go.

Aldwyth. I go. *(Aside.)* That I
 could stab her standing there!

[Exit Aldwyth.]

Edith. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

Harold. Never! never!

Edith. I saw it in her eyes!

Harold. I see it in thine.

And not on thee—nor England—fall
 God's doom!

Edith. On thee? on me. And thou
 art England! Alfred

Was England. Ethelred was nothing.
 England

Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

Harold. Edith,

The sign in heaven—the sudden blast
 at sea—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the
 dark dreams—

The Pope's Anathema—the Holy
 Rood

That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith,
 if

I, the last English king of England—

Edith. No,

First of a line that coming from the
 people,

And chosen by the people—

Harold. And fighting for

And dying for the people—

Edith. Living! living!

Harold. Yea so, good cheer! thou
 art Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

Edith. What matters how I look?
 Have we not broken Wales and Norse-

land? slain,

Whose life was all one battle, incar-
 nate war,

Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-
 arms

Than William.

Harold. Ay, my girl, no tricks in
 him—

No bastard he! when all was lost, he
 yell'd,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the
 ground,

And swaying his two-handed sword
 about him,

Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon
 us

And died so, and I loved him as I
 hate

This liar who made me liar. If Hate
 can kill,

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-
 axe—

Edith. Waste not thy might before
 the battle!

Harold. No,

And thou must hence. Stigand will
 see thee safe,

And so—Farewell.

[He is going, but turns back.]

The ring thou darest not wear,
 I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet
 my hand.

*[HAROLD shows the ring which is on
 his finger.]*

Farewell!

[He is going, but turns back again.]

I am as dead as Death this day to ought
 of earth's

Save William's death or mine.

Edith. Thy death! — to-day!
Is it not thy birthday?

Harold. Ay, that happy day!
A birthday welcome! happy days and
many!

One — this! [*They embrace.*]
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman cries (heard in the distance).

Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Enter GURTH.

Gurth. The Norman moves!

Harold. Harold and Holy Cross!
[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*]

Enter STIGAND.

Stigand. Our Church in arms — the
lamb the lion — not
Spear into pruning-hook — the counter
way —

Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.
Abbot Alfwig,

Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-
boro'

Strike for the king; but I, old wretch,
old Stigand,

With hands too limp to brandish iron
— and yet

I have a power — would Harold ask
me for it —

I have a power.

Edith. What power, holy father?

Stigand. Power now from Harold
to command thee hence

And see thee safe from Senlac.

Edith. I remain!

Stigand. Yea, so will I, daughter,
until I find

Which way the battle balance. I can
see it

From where we stand: and, live or
die, I would

I were among them!

Canons from Waltham (singing without).

Salva patriam
Sancte Pater,
Salva Fili,
Salva Spiritus,
Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater.¹

Edith. Are those the blessed angels
quiring, father?

Stigand. No, daughter, but the
canons out of Waltham,
The king's foundation, that have fol-
low'd him.

Edith. O God of battles, make their
wall of shields

¹ The *a* throughout these Latin hymns
should be sounded broad, as in "father."

Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their
palisades!

What is that whirring sound?

Stigand. The Norman arrow!

Edith. Look out upon the battle —
is he safe?

Stigand. The king of England
stands between his banners.

He glitters on the crowning of the hill.
God save King Harold!

Edith. — chosen by his people
And fighting for his people!

Stigand. There is one
Come as Goliath came of yore — he
flings

His brand in air and catches it again,
He is chanting some old warsong.

Edith. And no David
To meet him?

Stigand. Ay, there springs a Saxon
on him,

Falls — and another falls.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Lo! our good Gurth hath
smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam
Ruit prædator,
Illorum, Domine,
Scutum scindatur!
Hostis per Angliæ
Plagas bacchatur;
Casa crematur
Pastor fugatur
Grex trucidatur —

Stigand. Illos truida, Domine.

Edith. Ay, good father.

Canons (singing).

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

English cries. Harold and Holy
Cross! Out! out!

Stigand. Our javelins
Answer their arrows. All the Nor-
man foot

Are storming up the hill. The range
of knights

Sit, each a statue on his horse, and
wait.

English cries. Harold and God Al-
mighty!

Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Canons (singing).

Equus cum pedite
Præpediatur!
Illorum in lacrymas
Cruor fundatur!
Pereant, pereant,
Anglia precatur.

Stigand. Look, daughter, look.

Edith. Nay, father, look for me!

Stigand. Our axes lighten with a sin-
gle flash

About the summit of the hill, and heads
And arms are sliver'd off and splin-
ter'd by
Their lightning — and they fly — the
Norman flies.

Edith. Stigand, O father, have we
won the day?

Stigand. No, daughter, no — they
fall behind the horse —
Their horse are thronging to the bar-
ricades;

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter
Floating above their helmets — ha!
he is down!

Edith. He down! Who down?

Stigand. The Norman Count is
down.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
England!

Stigand. No, no, he hath risen
again — he bares his face —
Shouts something — he points onward
— all their horse

Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming
up.

Edith. O God of battles, make his
battle-axe keen
As thine own sharp-dividing justice,
heavy

As thine own bolts that fall on crime-
ful heads

Charged with the weight of heaven
wherefrom they fall!

Canons (singing).

Jacta tonitrua
Deus bellator!
Surgas e tenebris,
Sis vindicator!
Fulmina, fulmina,
Deus vastator!

Edith. O God of battles, they are
three to one,
Make thou one man as three to roll
them down!

Canons (singing).

Equus cum equite
Dejiciatur!
Acies, Acies
Prona sternatur!
Illorum lanceas
Frangere Creator!

Stigand. Yea, yea, for how their
lances snap and shiver
Against the shifting blaze of Harold's
axe!

War-woodman of old Woden, how he
fells

The mortal copse of faces! There!
And there!

The horse and horseman cannot meet
the shield,

The blow that brains the horseman
cleaves the horse,

The horse and horseman roll along
the hill,

They fly once more, they fly, the Nor-
man flies!

Equus cum equite
Præcipitatur.

Edith. O God, the God of truth hath
heard my cry.

Follow them, follow them, drive them
to the sea!

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

Stigand. Truth! no; a lie; a trick,
a Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse against
foot,

They murder all that follow.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Hot-headed fools — to burst
the wall of shields!

They have broken the commandment
of the king!

Edith. His oath was broken — O
holy Norman Saints,

Ye that now are of heaven, and see
beyond

Your Norman shrines, pardon it, par-
don it,

That he forswore himself for all he
loved,

Me, me and all! Look out upon the
battle!

Stigand. They thunder again upon
the barricades.

My sight is eagle, but the strife so
thick —

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash!
hold, willow!

English cries. Out, out!

Norman cries. Ha Rou!

Stigand. Ha! Gurth hath leapt upon
him

And slain him: he hath fallen.

Edith. And I am heard.

Glory to God in the Highest! fallen,
fallen!

Stigand. No, no, his horse — he
mounts another — wields

His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and
Gurth,

Our noble Gurth, is down!

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. And Leofwin is down!

Edith. Have mercy on us!

O Thou that knowest, let not my strong
prayer

Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I
love

The husband of another!

Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Edith. I do not hear our English
war-cry.

Stigand. No.

Edith. Look out upon the battle —
is he safe ?

Stigand. He stands between the
banners with the dead
So piled about him he can hardly
move.

Edith (takes up the war-cry). Out!
out!

Norman cries. Ha Rou !

Edith (cries out). Harold and Holy
Cross !

Norman cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. What is that whirring sound ?

Stigand. The Norman sends his ar-
rows up to Heaven,
They fall on those within the palisade !

Edith. Look out upon the hill — is
Harold there ?

Stigand. Sanguelac — Sanguelac —
the arrow — the arrow ! — away !

SCENE II. — FIELD OF THE DEAD.
NIGHT.

ALDWYTH and EDITH.

Aldwyth. O Edith, art thou here ?
O Harold, Harold —

Our Harold — we shall never see him
more.

Edith. For there was more than sis-
ter in my kiss,

And so the saints were wroth. I can-
not love them,

For they are Norman saints — and yet
I should —

They are so much holier than their
harlot's son

With whom they play'd their game
against the king !

Aldwyth. The king is slain, the
kingdom overthrown !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. How no matter, Harold
slain ? —

I cannot find his body. O help me
thou !

O Edith, if I ever wrought against
thee,

Forgive me thou, and help me here !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. Not help me, nor forgive
me ?

Edith. So thou saidest.

Aldwyth. I say it now, forgive me !

Edith. Cross me not !

I am seeking one who wedded me in
secret.

Whisper ! God's angels only know it.
Ha !

What art thou doing here among the
dead ?

They are stripping the dead bodies
naked yonder,

And thou art come to rob them of
their rings !

Aldwyth. O Edith, Edith, I have
lost both crown

And husband.

Edith. So have I.

Aldwyth. I tell thee, girl,
I am seeking my dead Harold.

Edith. And I mine !
The Holy Father strangled him with
a hair

Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt ;
The wicked sister clapt her hands and
laugh'd ;

Then all the dead fell on him.

Aldwyth. Edith, Edith —

Edith. What was he like, this hus-
band ? like to thee ?

Call not for help from me. I knew
him not.

He lies not here : not close beside the
standard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts
of England.

Go further hence and find him.

Aldwyth. She is crazed !

Edith. That doth not matter either.
Lower the light.

He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, OSGOD and
ATHELRIC, with torches. They
turn over the dead bodies and
examine them as they pass.*

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.

Athelric. More likely Godric.

Osgod. I am sure this body
Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

Athelric. So it is !

No, no — brave Gurth, one gash from
brow to knee !

Osgod. And here is Leofwin.

Edith. And here is He !

Aldwyth. Harold ? Oh no — nay, if
it were — my God,

They have so maim'd and murder'd
all his face

There is no man can swear to him.

Edith. But one woman !

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not someone ask'd me for
forgiveness ?

I yield it freely, being the true wife

Of this dead King, who never bore
revenge.

*Enter COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM
MALET.*

William. Who be these women ?

And what body is this ?

Edith. Harold, thy better !

William. Ay, and what art thou ?

Edith. His wife !

Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the
Queen ! [*Pointing out Aldwyth.*]

William (to Aldwyth). Wast thou
his Queen?

Aldwyth. I was the Queen of Wales.

William. Why then of England.

Madam, fear us not.

(*To Malet.*) Knowest thou this
other?

Malet. When I visited England,
Some held she was his wife in secret
— some —

Well — some believed she was his
paramour.

Edith. Norman, thou liest! liars all
of you,

Your Saints and all! *I* am his wife!
and she —

For look, our marriage ring!

[*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*

I lost it somehow —

*I lost it, playing with it when I was
wild.*

*That bred the doubt! but I am wiser
now . . .*

*I am too wise . . . Will none among
you all*

*Bear me true witness — only for this
once —*

That I have found it here again?

[*She puts it on.*

And thou.

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore,

[*Falls on the body and dies.*

William. Death! — and enough of

death for this one day,

*The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,
My day when I was born.*

Malet. And this dead king's

Who, king or not, hath kinglike
fought and fallen,

*His birthday, too. It seems but yes-
ter-even*

*I held it with him in his English
halls,*

*His day, with all his rooftree ringing
"Harold,"*

Before he fell into the snare of Guy;

*When all men counted Harold would
be king,*

And Harold was most happy.

William. Thou art half English.

Take them away!

Malet, I vow to build a church to God

*Here on the hill of battle; let our
high altar*

*Stand where their standard fell . . .
where these two lie.*

*Take them away, I do not love to see
them.*

*Pluck the dead woman off the dead
man, Malet!*

Malet. Faster than ivy. Must *I*
hack her arms off?

How shall I part them?

William. Leave them. Let them be!

Bury him and his paramour together.
*He that was false in oath to me, it
seems*

*Was false to his own wife. We will
not give him*

*A Christian burial: yet he was a war-
rior,*

*And wise, yea truthful, till that
blighted vow*

Which God avenged to-day.

*Wrap them together in a purple cloak
And lay them both upon the waste
sea-shore*

*At Hastings, there to guard the land
for which*

*He did forswear himself — a warrior
— ay,*

*And but that Holy Peter fought for us,
And that the false Northumbrian held*

aloof,

*And save for that chance arrow which
the Saints*

*Sharpen'd and sent against him —
who can tell? —*

*There horses had I slain beneath me:
twice*

*I thought that all was lost. Since I
knew battle,*

*And that was from my boyhood,
never yet —*

*No, by the splendor of God — have I
fought men*

*Like Harold and his brethren, and his
guard*

*Of English. Every man about his king
Fell where he stood. They loved him:*

and, pray God

*My Normans may but move as true
with me*

*To the door of death. Of one self-
stock at first,*

*Make them again one people — Nor-
man, English;*

*And English, Norman; we should
have a hand*

*To grasp the world with, and a foot
to stamp it . . .*

*Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over.
No more blood!*

*I am king of England, so they thwart
me not,*

*And I will rule according to their laws.
(*To Aldwyth.*) Madam, we will en-
treat thee with all honor.*

Aldwyth. My punishment is more
than *I* can bear.

THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to "The Lover's Tale" states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light — accompanied with a reprint of the sequel — a work of my mature life — "The Golden Supper"?

May, 1879.

ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the top-
most cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacan-
cies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping
seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way
down rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from
sky to sky.
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet
bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud
world,
Where the chafed breakers of the
outer sea
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful
love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines
that fledged
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love
watcheth Love,
In thine own essence, and delight thy-
self
To make it wholly thine on sunny
days.
Keep thou thy name of "Lover's
Bay." See, sirs,
Even now the Goddess of the Past,
that takes
The heart, and sometimes touches but
one string
That quivers, and is silent, and some-
times
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd
chords
To some old melody, begins to
play

That air which pleased her first. I
feel thy breath;
I come, great Mistress of the ear and
eye:
Thy breath is of the pinewood; and
tho' years
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy
strait
Betwixt the native land of Love and
me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the
sail
Will draw me to the rising of the
sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning
star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,
To pass my hand across my brows,
and muse
On those dear hills, that never more
will meet
The sight that throbs and aches be-
neath my touch,
As tho' there beat a heart in either
eye;
For when the outer lights are darken'd
thus,
The memory's vision hath a keener
edge.
It grows upon me now — the semi-
circle
Of dark-blue waters and the narrow
fringe
Of curving beach — its wreaths of
dripping green —
Its pale pink shells — the summer-
house aloft
That open'd on the pines with doors
of glass,

A mountain nest — the pleasure-boat
 that rock'd,
 Light-green with its own shadow, keel
 to keel,
 Upon the dappled dimplings of the
 wave,
 That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope !

They come, they crowd upon me all
 at once —
 Moved from the cloud of unforgotten
 things,
 That sometimes on the horizon of the
 mind
 Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in
 storm —
 Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me
 — days
 Of dewy dawning and the amber
 eves
 When thou and I, Camilla, thou and
 I
 Were borne about the bay or safely
 moor'd
 Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where
 the tide
 Splash'd, sapping its worn ribs ; and all
 without
 The slowly-ridging rollers on the
 cliffs
 Clash'd, calling' to each other, and
 thro' the arch
 Down those loud waters, like a setting
 star,
 Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-
 house shone,
 And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
 Would often loiter in her balmy
 blue,
 To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love

Waver'd at anchor with me, when day
 hung
 From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy
 halls ;
 Gleams of the water-circles as they
 broke,
 Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about
 her lips,
 Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,
 Leapt like a passing thought across
 her eyes ;
 And mine with one that will not pass,
 till earth
 And heaven pass too, dwelt on-my
 heaven, a face
 Most starry-fair, but kindled from
 within
 As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-
 hair'd, dark-eyed :
 Oh, such dark eyes ! a single glance
 of them
 Will govern a whole life from birth
 to death,

Careless of all things else, led on
 with light
 In trances and in visions : look at
 them,
 You lose yourself in utter ignorance ;
 You cannot find their depth ; for they
 go back,
 And farther back, and still withdraw
 themselves
 Quite into the deep soul, that ever-
 more
 Fresh springing from her fountains in
 the brain,
 Still pouring thro', floods with redun-
 dant life
 Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago

I should have died, if it were possible
 To die in gazing on that perfectness
 Which I do bear within me : I had
 died,
 But from my farthest lapse, my latest
 ebb,
 Thine image, like a charm of light
 and strength
 Upon the waters, push'd me back
 again
 On these deserted sands of barren life.
 Tho' from the deep vault where the
 heart of Hope
 Fell into dust, and crumbled in the
 dark —
 Forgetting how to render beautiful
 Her countenance with quick and
 healthful blood —
 Thou didst not sway me upward ;
 could I perish
 While thou, a meteor of the sepul-
 chre,
 Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's
 quiet urn
 For ever ? He, that saith it, hath
 o'er-stept
 The slippery footing of his narrow
 wit,
 And fall'n away from judgment.
 Thou art light,
 To which my spirit leaneth all her
 flowers,
 And length of days, and immortality
 Of thought, and freshness ever self-
 renew'd.
 For Time and Grief abode too long
 with Life,
 And, like all other friends i' the world,
 at last
 They grew weary of her fellowship :
 So Time and Grief did beckon unto
 Death,
 And Death drew nigh and beat the
 doors of Life ;
 But thou didst sit alone in the inner
 house,
 A wakeful portress, and didst parle
 with Death, —

"This is a charmed dwelling which I hold;"
 So Death gave back, and would no further come.
 Yet is my life nor in the present time,
 Nor in the present place. To me alone,
 Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
 The Present is the vassal of the Past:
 So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
 And cannot die, and am, in having been —
 A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
 Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;
 A body journeying onward, sick with toil,
 The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
 The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,
 And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
 Which long ago they had glean'd and garner'd up
 Into the granaries of memory —
 The clear brow, bulwark of the precious brain,
 Chink'd as you see, and seam'd — and all the while
 The light soul twines and mingles with the growths
 Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
 Married, made one with, molten into all
 The beautiful in Past of act or place,
 And like the all-enduring camel, driven
 Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,
 Who toils across the middle moonlit nights,
 Or when the white heats of the blind-ing noons
 Beat from the concave sand; yet in him keeps
 A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves,
 To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit
 From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
 When I began to love. How should I tell you?
 Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
 Flow back again unto my slender spring
 And first of love, tho' every turn and depth
 Between is clearer in my life than all
 Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.

How should the broad and open flower tell
 What sort of bud it was, when, prest together
 In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,
 It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
 Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?
 For young Life knows not when young Life was born,
 But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
 Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember
 Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
 Looking on her that brought him to the light:
 Or as men know not when they fall asleep
 Into delicious dreams, our other life,
 So know I not when I began to love.
 This is my sum of knowledge — that my love
 Grew with myself — say rather, was my growth,
 My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
 My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,
 Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
 Is to me daily life and daily death:
 For how should I have lived and not have loved?
 Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,
 The color and the sweetness from the rose,
 And place them by themselves; or set apart
 Their motions and their brightness from the stars,
 And then point out the flower or the star?
 Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,
 And tell me where I am? 'Tis even thus:
 In that I live I love; because I love
 I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
 Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
 Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
 There is no shade or fold of mystery
 Swathing the other.

Many, many years,
 (For they seem many and my most of life,
 And well I could have linger'd in that porch,
 So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place,)

In the Maydews of childhood, opposite
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived
together,
Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father
died,
And he was happy that he saw it not;
But I and the first daisy on his grave
From the same clay came into light
at once.

As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.
How like each other was the birth of
each!

On the same morning, almost the same
hour,
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(Oh falsehood of all stargcraft!) we
were born.

How like each other was the birth of
each!

The sister of my mother—she that
bore

Camilla close beneath her beating
heart,

Which to the imprison'd spirit of the
child,

With its true-touched pulses in the
flow

And hourly visitation of the blood,
Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer
world—

My mother's sister, mother of my
love,

Who had a twofold claim upon my
heart,

One twofold mightier than the other
was,

In giving so much beauty to the
world,

And so much wealth as God had
charged her with—

Loathing to put it from herself for
ever,

Left her own life with it; and dying
thus,

Crown'd with her highest act the
placid face

And breathless body of her good deeds
past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She
was motherless

And I without a father. So from
each

Of those two pillars which from earth
uphold

Our childhood, one had fallen away,
and all

The careful burthen of our tender
years

Trembled upon the other. He that
gave

Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling ten-
derness.

He waked for both: he pray'd for
both: he slept

Dreaming of both: nor was his love
the less

Because it was divided, and shot forth,
Boughs on each side, laden with whole-
some shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of
life.

She was my foster-sister: on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested: one
soft lap

Pillow'd us both: a common light of
eyes

Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from
thence

The stream of life, one stream, one
life, one blood,

One sustenance, which, still as thought
grew large,

Still larger moulding all the house of
thought,

Made all our tastes and fancies like,
perhaps—

All—all but one; and strange to me,
and sweet,

Sweet thro' strange years to know
that whatsoe'er

Our general mother meant for me
alone,

Our mutual mother dealt to both of
us:

So what was earliest mine in earliest
life,

I shared with her in whom myself
remains.

As was our childhood, so our in-
fancy,

They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.

They tell me that we would not be
alone,—

We cried when we were parted; when
I wept,

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my
tears,

Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow; that
we loved

The sound of one-another's voices
more

Than the gray cuckoo loves his name,
and learn'd

To lisp in tune together; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face.

Heart beating time to heart, lip press-
ing lip,

Folding each other, breathing on each
other,

Dreaming together (dreaming of each
 other
 They should have added), till the
 morning light
 Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy
 pane
 Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we
 woke
 To gaze upon each other. If this be
 true,
 At thought of which my whole soul
 languishes
 And faints, and hath no pulse, no
 breath—as tho'
 A man in some still garden should in-
 fuse
 Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,
 Till, drunk with its own wine, and
 overfull
 Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
 It fall on its own thorns—if this be
 true—
 And that way my wish leads me ever-
 more
 Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a
 thought,
 Why in the utter stillness of the soul
 Doth question'd memory answer not,
 nor tell
 Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
 Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har-
 mony?
 O blossom'd portal of the lonely
 house,
 Green prelude, April promise, glad
 new year
 Of Being, which with earliest violets
 And lavish carol of clear-throated larks
 Fill'd all the March of life!—I will
 not speak of thee.
 These have not seen thee, these can
 never know thee,
 They cannot understand me. Pass
 we then
 A term of eighteen years. Ye would
 but laugh,
 If I should tell you how I hoard in
 thought
 The faded rhymes and scraps of an-
 cient crones,
 Gray relics of the nurseries of the
 world,
 Which are as gems set in my memory,
 Because she learnt them with me; or
 what use
 To know her father left us just before
 The daffodil was blown? or how we
 found
 The dead man cast upon the shore?
 All this
 Seems to the quiet daylight of your
 minds
 But cloud and smoke, and in the dark
 of mine
 Is traced with flame. Move with me
 to the event.

There came a glorious morning,
 such a one
 As dawns but once a season. Mercury
 On such a morning would have flung
 himself
 From cloud to cloud, and swum with
 balanced wings
 To some tall mountain: when I said
 to her,
 "A day for Gods to stoop," she an-
 swered. "Ay,
 And men to soar:" for as that other
 gazed,
 Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
 The prophet and the chariot and the
 steeds,
 Suck'd into oneness like a little star
 Were drunk into the inmost blue, we
 stood,
 When first we came from out the
 pines at noon,
 With hands for caves, uplooking and
 almost
 Waiting to see some blessed shape in
 heaven,
 So bathed we were in brilliance.
 Never yet
 Before or after have I known the
 spring
 Pour with such sudden deluges of
 light
 Into the middle summer; for that day
 Love, rising, shook his wings, and
 charged the winds
 With spiced May-sweets from bound
 to bound, and blew
 Fresh fire into the sun, and from
 within
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent
 his soul
 Into the songs of birds, and touch'd
 far-off
 His mountain-altars, his high hills,
 with flame
 Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:
 The great pine shook with lonely
 sounds of joy
 That came on the sea-wind. As
 mountain streams
 Our blood ran free: the sunshine
 seem'd to brood
 More warmly on the heart than on
 the brow.
 We often paused, and, looking back,
 we saw
 The clefts and openings in the moun-
 tains fill'd
 With the blue valley and the glisten-
 ing brooks,
 And all the low dark groves, a land
 of love!
 A land of promise, a land of memory,
 A land of promise flowing with the
 milk

And honey of delicious memories!
 And down to sea, and far as eye could
 ken,
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy
 Land,
 Still growing holier as you near'd the
 bay,
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
 The grassy platform on some hill, I
 stoop'd,
 I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her
 brows
 And mine made garlands of the self-
 same flower,
 Which she took smiling, and with my
 work thus
 Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or
 twice she told me
 (For I remember all things) to let grow
 The flowers that run poison in their
 veins.
 She said, "The evil flourish in the
 world."
 Then playfully she gave herself the
 lie—
 "Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;
 So, brother, pluck and spare not."
 So I wove
 Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem,
 "whose flower,
 Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sun-
 rise,
 Liketo the wild youth of an evil prince,
 Is without sweetness, but who crowns
 himself
 Above the naked poisons of his heart
 In his old age." A graceful thought
 of hers
 Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how
 like a nymph,
 A stately mountain nymph she look'd!
 how native
 Unto the hills she trod on! While I
 gazed
 My coronal slowly disentwined itself
 And fell between us both; tho' while
 I gazed
 My spirit leap'd as with those thrills
 of bliss
 That strike across the soul in prayer,
 and show us
 That we are surely heard. Methought
 a light
 Burst from the garland I had wov'n,
 and stood
 A solid glory on her bright black hair;
 A light methought broke from her
 dark, dark eyes,
 And shot itself into the singing winds;
 A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her
 white robe
 As from a glass in the sun, and fell
 about
 My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came
 To what our people call "The Hill of
 Woe."
 A bridge is there, that, look'd at from
 beneath
 Seems but a cobweb filament to link
 The yawning of an earthquake-cloven
 chasm.
 And thence one night, when all the
 winds were loud,
 A woful man (for so the story went)
 Had thrust his wife and child and
 dash'd himself
 Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
 Fierce in the strength of far descent,
 a stream
 Flies with a shatter'd foam along the
 chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strown
 with crags:
 We mounted slowly; yet to both
 there came
 The joy of life in steepness overcome,
 And victories of ascent, and looking
 down
 On all that had look'd down on us;
 and joy
 In breathing nearer heaven; and joy
 to me,
 High over all the azure-circled earth,
 To breath with her as if in heaven it-
 self;
 And more than joy that I to her be-
 came
 Her guardian and her angel, raising her
 Still higher, past all peril, until she saw
 Beneath her feet the region far away,
 Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky
 brows,
 Arise in open prospect—heath and hill,
 And hollow lined and wooded to the
 lips,
 And deep-down walls of battlemented
 rock
 Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into
 spires,
 And glory of broad waters interfused,
 Whence rose as it were breath and
 steam of gold,
 And over all the great wood rioting
 And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at
 intervals
 With falling brook or blossom'd bush
 —and last,
 Framing the mighty landscape to the
 west,
 A purple range of mountain-cones,
 between
 Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding
 bursts
 The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.

At length
 Descending from the point and stand-
 ing both,

There on the tremulous bridge, that
 from beneath
 Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in
 air,
 We paused amid the splendor. All
 the west
 And ev'n unto the middle south was
 ribb'd
 And barr'd with bloom on bloom.
 The sun below,
 Held for a space 'twixt cloud and
 wave, shower'd down
 Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over
 That various wilderness a tissue of
 light
 Unparallel'd. On the other side, the
 moon,
 Half-melted into thin blue air, stood
 still,
 And pale and fibrous as a wither'd
 leaf,
 Not yet endured in presence of His eyes
 To indue his lustre; most unloverlike,
 Since in his absence full of light and
 joy,
 And giving light to others. But this
 most,
 Next to her presence whom I loved
 so well,
 Spoke loudly even into my inmost
 heart
 As to my outward hearing: the loud
 stream,
 Forth issuing from his portals in the
 crag
 (A visible link unto the home of my
 heart),
 Ran amber toward the west, and nigh
 the sea
 Parting my own loved mountains was
 received,
 Shorn of its strength, into the sym-
 pathy
 Of that small bay, which out to open
 main
 Glow'd intermingling close beneath
 the sun.
 Spirit of Love! that little hour was
 bound
 Shut in from Time, and dedicate to
 thee:
 Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it,
 and the earth
 They fell on became hallow'd ever-
 more.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers
 were bright, and mine
 Were dim with floating tears, that shot
 the sunset
 In lightnings round me; and my name
 was borne
 Upon her breath. Henceforth my
 name has been
 A hallow'd memory like the names of
 old,

A center'd, glory-circled memory,
 And a peculiar treasure, brooking
 not
 Exchange or currency: and in that
 hour
 A hope flow'd round me, like a golden
 mist
 Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,
 A moment, ere the onward whirlwind
 shatter it,
 Waver'd and floated — which was less
 than Hope,
 Because it lack'd the power of perfect
 Hope;
 But which was more and higher than
 all Hope,
 Because all other Hope had lower aim;
 Even that this name to which her
 gracious lips
 Did lend such gentle utterance, this
 one name,
 In some obscure hereafter, might in-
 wreath
 (How lovelier, nobler then!) her life,
 her love,
 With my life, love, soul, spirit, and
 heart and strength.

"Brother," she said, "let this be
 call'd henceforth
 The Hill of Hope;" and I replied,
 "O sister,
 My will is one with thine; the Hill of
 Hope."
 Nevertheless, we did not change the
 name.

I did not speak: I could not speak
 my love.
 Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in
 lip-depths.
 Love wraps his wings on either side
 the heart,
 Constraining it with kisses close and
 warm,
 Absorbing all the incense of sweet
 thoughts
 So that they pass not to the shrine of
 sound.
 Else had the life of that delighted hour
 Drunk in the largeness of the utter-
 ance
 Of Love; but how should Earthly
 measure mete
 The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimit-
 ed Love,
 Who scarce can tune his high majestic
 sense
 Unto the thundersong that wheels the
 spheres,
 Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
 And flowing odor of the spacious air,
 Scarce housed within the circle of this
 Earth,
 Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,

Which pass with that which breathes
 them? Sooner Earth
 Might go round Heaven, and the strait
 girth of Time
 Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,
 Than language grasp the infinite of
 Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy
 hour,
 Thou art blessed in the years, divinest
 day!
 O Genius of that hour which dost up-
 hold
 Thy coronal of glory like a God,
 Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
 Who walk before thee, ever turning
 round
 To gaze upon thee till their eyes are
 dim
 With dwelling on the light and depth
 of thine,
 Thy name is ever worshipp'd among
 hours!
 Had I died then, I had not seem'd to
 die,
 For bliss stood round me like the light
 of Heaven,—
 Had I died then, I had not known the
 death;
 Yea had the Power from whose right
 hand the light
 Of Life issueth, and from whose left
 hand floweth
 The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-
 ences,
 Whereof to all that draw the whole-
 some air,
 Somewhile the one must overflow the
 other;
 Then had he stemm'd my day with
 night, and driven
 My current to the fountain whence it
 sprang,—
 Even his own abiding excellence—
 On me, methinks, that shock of gloom
 had fall'n
 Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged
 The other, like the sun I gaz'd upon,
 Which seeming for the moment due
 to death,
 And dipping his head low beneath the
 verge,
 Yet bearing round about him his own
 day,
 In confidence of unabated strength,
 Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven,
 from light to light,
 And holdeth his undimmed forehead
 far
 Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the down-
 ward hill;
 We past from light to dark. On the
 other side

Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain
 hall,
 Which none have fathom'd. If you
 go far in
 (The country people rumor) you may
 hear
 The moaning of the woman and the
 child,
 Shut in the secret chambers of the
 rock.
 I too have heard a sound—perchance
 of streams
 Running far on within its inmost
 halls,
 The home of darkness; but the cav-
 ern-mouth,
 Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
 Gives birth to a brawling brook, that
 passing lightly
 Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
 Is presently received in a sweet grave
 Of eglantines, a place of burial
 Far lovelier than its cradle; for un-
 seen,
 But taken with the sweetness of the
 place,
 It makes a constant bubbling melody
 That drowns the nearer echoes. Low-
 er down
 Spreads out a little lake, that, flood-
 ing, leaves
 Low banks of yellow sand; and from
 the woods
 That belt it rise three dark, tall cy-
 presses,—
 Three cypresses, symbols of mortal
 woe,
 That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,
 And sitting down upon the golden
 moss,
 Held converse sweet and low—low
 converse sweet,
 In which our voices bore least part.
 The wind
 Told a lovetale beside us, how he woo'd
 The waters, and the waters answering
 lisp'd
 To kisses of the wind, that, sick with
 love,
 Fainted at intervals, and grew again
 To utterance of passion. Ye cannot
 shape
 Fancy so fair as is this memory.
 Methought all excellence that ever was
 Had drawn herself from many thou-
 sand years,
 And all the separate Edens of this
 earth,
 To centre in this place and time. I
 listen'd,
 And her words stole with most pre-
 vailing sweetness
 Into my heart, as thronging fancies
 come

To boys and girls when summer days
are new,
And soul and heart and body are all
at ease :
What marvel my Camilla told me all ?
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a
place,
And I was as the brother of her blood,
And by that name I moved upon her
breath ;
Dear name, which had too much of
nearness in it
And heralded the distance of this time !
At first her voice was very sweet and
low,
As if she were afraid of utterance ;
But in the onward current of her
speech,
(As echoes of the hollow-banked
brooks
Are fashion'd by the channel which
they keep),
Her words did of their meaning bor-
row sound,
Her cheek did catch the color of her
words.
I heard and trembled, yet I could but
hear ;
My heart paused — my raised eyelids
would not fall,
But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.
I seem'd the only part of Time stood
still,
And saw the motion of all other things ;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my
ear
Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not
to speak ;
But she spake on, for I did name no
wish,
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and
Love —
"Perchance," she said, "return'd."
Even then the stars
Did tremble in their stations as I gazed ;
But she spake on, for I did name no
wish,
No wish — no hope. Hope was not
wholly dead,
But breathing hard at the approach
of Death, —
Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine —
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her
mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign
as king,
There, where that day I crown'd my-
self as king,
There in my realm and even on my
throne,
Another ! then it seem'd as tho' a link

Of some tight chain within my inmost
frame
Was riven in twain : that life I heeded
not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of
the grave,
The darkness of the grave and utter
night,
Did swallow up my vision ; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto
Death.

Then had the earth beneath me
yawing cloven
With such a sound as when an iceberg
splits
From cope to base — had Heaven from
all her doors,
With all her golden thresholds clash-
ing, roll'd
Her heaviest thunder — I had lain as
dead,
Mute, blind and motionless as then I
lay ;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life
for me !
Mute, for henceforth what use were
words to me !
Blind, for the day was as the night to
me !
The night to me was kinder than the
day ;
The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly
born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the
light ;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the ten-
der love
Of him she brooded over. Would I
had lain
Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild
brier had driven
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpain-
ing brows,
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
The wind had blown above me, and
the rain
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded
snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of
Love,
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me.
All too soon
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not hear denial, vain and
rude
With proffer of unwish'd-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,

With hated warmth of apprehensive-
ness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled
brook
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd
to hear
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman
hears,
Who with his head below the surface
dropt
Listens the muffled booming indistinct
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more: and then
came in
The white light of the weary moon
above,
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape
to me
Him who should own that name? Were
it not well
If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
A fashion and a phantasm of the
form
It should attach to? Phantom! —
had the ghostliest
That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken
by it,
There in the shuddering moonlight
brought its face
And what it has for eyes as close to
mine
As he did — better that than his, than
he
The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the
beloved,
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
O how her choice did leap forth from
his eyes!
O how her love did clothe itself in
smiles
About his lips! and — not one mo-
ment's grace —
Then when the effect weigh'd seas
upon my head
To come my way! to twit me with the
cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all
her ways
To him as me? Was not his wont to
walk
Between the going light and growing
night?
Had I not learnt my loss before he
came?
Could that be more because he came
my way?
Why should he not come my way if
he would?
And yet to-night, to-night — when all
my wealth

Flash'd from me in a moment and I
fell
Beggar'd for ever — why *should* he
come my way
Robed in those robes of light I must
not wear,
With that great crown of beams about
his brows —
Come like an angel to a damned
soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with
God —
Come like a careless and a greedy
heir
That scarce can wait the reading of
the will
Before he takes possession? Was
mine a mood
To be invaded rudely, and not rather
A sacred, secret unapproached woe,
Unspeakable? I was shut up with
Grief;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it
for herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice;
I was the High Priest in her holiest
place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy
as these well-nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain: but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm
upstay'd.
I thought it was an adder's fold, and
once
I strove to disengage myself, but
fail'd,
Being so feeble: she bent above me,
too;
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoe'er
of blight
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had
made
The red rose there a pale one — and
her eyes —
I saw the moonlight glitter on their
tears —
And some few drops of that distress-
ful rain
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets
moved,
Drooping and beaten by the breeze,
and brush'd
My fallen forehead in their to and
fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they
had flow'd abroad,
And floated on and parted round her
neck,
Mantling her form halfway. She,
when I woke,

Something she ask'd, I know not what,
 and ask'd,
 Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for
 the sound
 Of that dear voice so musically low,
 And now first heard with any sense
 of pain,
 As it had taken life away before,
 Choked all the syllables, that strove
 to rise
 From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,
 From his great hoard of happiness
 distill'd
 Some drops of solace; like a vain
 rich man,
 That, having always prosper'd in the
 world,
 Folding his hands, deals comfortable
 words
 To hearts wounded for ever; yet, in
 truth,
 Fair speech was his and delicate of
 phrase,
 Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd
 More to the inward than the outward
 ear,
 As rain of the midsummer midnight
 soft,
 Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and
 the green
 Of the dead spring: but mine was
 wholly dead,
 No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit
 for me.
 Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd
 wrong?
 And why was I to darken their pure
 love,
 If, as I found, they two did love each
 other,
 Because my own was darken'd? Why
 was I
 To cross between their happy star and
 them?
 To stand a shadow by their shining
 doors,
 And vex them with my darkness?
 Did I love her?
 Ye know that I did love her; to this
 present
 My full-orb'd love has waned not.
 Did I love her,
 And could I look upon her tearful
 eyes?
 What had *she* done to weep? Why
 should *she* weep?
 O innocent of spirit — let my heart
 Break rather — whom the gentlest
 airs of Heaven
 Should kiss with an unwonted gentle-
 ness.
 Her love did murder mine? What
 then? She deem'd

I wore a brother's mind: she call'd
 me brother:
 She told me all her love: she shall
 not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought,
 awhile
 In battle with the glooms of my dark
 will,
 Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up
 There on the depth of an unfathom'd
 woe
 Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
 As from a dismal dream of my own
 death,
 I, for I loved her, lost my love in
 Love;
 I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she
 lov'd,
 And laid it in her own, and sent my
 cry
 Thro' the blank night to Him who
 loving made
 The happy and the unhappy love,
 that He
 Would hold the hand of blessing over
 them,
 Lionel, the happy, and her, and her,
 his bride!
 Let them so love that men and boys
 may say,
 "Lo! how they love each other!" till
 their love
 Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
 Known, when their faces are forgot in
 the land —
 One golden dream of love, from which
 may death
 Awake them with heaven's music in a
 life
 More living to some happier happi-
 ness,
 Swallowing its precedent in victory.
 And as for me, Camilla, as for me, —
 The dew of tears is an unwholesome
 dew,
 They will but sicken the sick plant
 the more.
 Deem that I love thee but as brothers
 do,
 So shalt thou love me still as sisters
 do;
 Or if thou dream aught farther,
 dream but how
 I could have loved thee, had there
 been none else
 To love as lovers, loved again by
 thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I
 spake,
 When I beheld her weep so rue-
 fully;
 For sure my love should ne'er indue
 the front

And mask of Hate, who lives on
 others' moans.
 Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter draughts,
 And batten on her poisons? Love forbid!
 Love passeth not the threshold of cold Hate,
 And Hate is strange beneath the roof of Love.
 O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears
 Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine image,
 The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
 Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the source
 Of these sad tears, and feeds their downward flow.
 So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to death,
 Received unto himself a part of blame,
 Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
 Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,
 And all the clearness of his fame hath gone
 Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
 First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,
 And looking round upon his tearful friends,
 Forthwith and in his agony conceives
 A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime —
 For withal without some guilt should such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the abysm
 Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,
 Who never hail'd another — was there one?
 There might be one — one other, worth the life
 That made it sensible. So that hour died
 Like odor rapt into the winged wind
 Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built,
 that they,
 They — when their love is wreck'd —
 if Love can wreck —
 On that sharp ridge of utmost doom
 ride highly
 Above the perilous seas of Change
 and Chance;

Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheerfulness;
 As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
 Knit to some dismal sandbank far at sea,
 All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
 Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave.
 For me — what light, what gleam on those black ways
 Where Love could walk with banish'd Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters fair;
 Love's arms were wreath'd about the neck of Hope,
 And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath
 In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd tales.
 They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,
 And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
 At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
 The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope,
 And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears.

II.

From that time forth I would not see her more;
 But many weary moons I lived alone —
 Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.
 Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
 All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,
 And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands
 Insensibly I drew her name, until
 The meaning of the letters shot into My brain; anon the wanton billow wash'd
 Them over, till they faded like my love.
 The hollow caverns heard me — the black brooks
 Of the midforest heard me — the soft winds,
 Laden with thistledown and seeds of flowers,
 Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice
 Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew me,
 The squirrel knew me, and the dragon-fly

Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
 The rough brier tore my bleeding
 palms; the hemlock,
 Brow-high, did strike my forehead as
 I past;
 Yet trod I not the wildflower in my
 path,
 Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end?
 Why grew we then together in one
 plot?
 Why fed we from one fountain? drew
 one sun?
 Why were our mothers' branches of
 one stem?
 Why were we one in all things, save
 in that
 Where to have been one had been the
 cope and crown
 Of all I hoped and fear'd? — if that
 same nearness
 Were father to this distance, and that
 one
 Vauntcourier to the double? if Affec-
 tion
 Living slew Love, and Sympathy
 hew'd out
 The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the
 hill
 Where last we roam'd together, for the
 sound
 Of the loud stream was pleasant, and
 the wind
 Came wooingly with woodbine smells.
 Sometimes
 All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
 Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-
 cones
 That spired above the wood; and with
 mad hand
 Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-
 screen,
 I cast them in the noisy brook be-
 neath,
 And watch'd them till they vanish'd
 from my sight
 Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-
 tines:
 And all the fragments of the living
 rock
 (Huge blocks, which some old trem-
 bling of the world
 Had loosen'd from the mountain, till
 they fell
 Half-digging their own graves) these
 in my agony
 Did I make bare of all the golden
 moss,
 Wherewith the dashing runnel in the
 spring
 Had liveried them all over. In my
 brain

The spirit seem'd to flag from thought
 to thought,
 As moonlight wandering thro' a mist:
 my blood
 Crept like marsh drains thro' all my
 languid limbs;
 The motions of my heart seem'd far
 within me,
 Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its
 pulses;
 And yet it shook me, that my frame
 would shudder,
 As if 'twere drawn asunder by the
 rack.
 But over the deep graves of Hope and
 Fear,
 And all the broken palaces of the
 Past,
 Brooded one master-passion evermore,
 Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
 Above some fair metropolis, earth-
 shock'd,—
 Hung round with ragged rims and
 burning folds,—
 Embrathing all with wild and woful
 hues,
 Great hills of ruins, and collapsed
 masses
 Of thundershaken columns indistinct,
 And fused together in the tyrannous
 light —
 Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was
 no more,
 Some one had told me she was dead,
 and ask'd
 If I would see her burial: then I seem'd
 To rise, and through the forest-shadow
 borne
 With more than mortal swiftmess, I
 ran down
 The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
 Therear of a procession, curving round
 The silver-sheeted bay: in front of
 which
 Six stately virgins, all in white, upbear
 A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest
 lawn,
 Wreathed round the bier with gar-
 lands: in the distance,
 From out the yellow woods upon the
 hill
 Look'd forth the summit and the pin-
 nacles
 Of a gray steeple — thence at intervals
 A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
 Save those six virgins which upheld
 the bier,
 Were stoled from head to foot in flow-
 ing black;
 One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd
 his brow,
 And he was loud in weeping and in
 praise
 Of her we follow'd: a strong sympathy

Shook all my soul: I flung myself
 upon him
 In tears and cries: I told him all my
 love,
 How I had loved her from the first;
 whereat
 He shrank and howl'd, and from his
 brow drew back
 His hand to push me from him; and
 the face,
 The very face and form of Lionel
 Flash'd thro' my eyes into my inner-
 most brain,
 And at his feet I seem'd to faint and
 fall,
 To fall and die away. I could not rise
 Albeit I strove to follow. They past
 on,
 The lordly Phantasms! in their float-
 ing folds
 They past and were no more: but I
 had fallen
 Prone to the dashing runnel on the
 grass.

Always the inaudible invisible
 thought,
 Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
 Shaped by the audible and visible,
 Moulded the audible and visible;
 All crisped sounds of wave and leaf
 and wind,
 Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain;
 The cloud-pavilion'd element, the
 wood,
 The mountain, the three cypresses, the
 cave,
 Storm, sunset, glows and glories of
 the moon
 Below black firs, when silent-creeping
 winds
 Laid the long night in silver streaks
 and bars,
 Were wrought into the tissue of my
 dream:
 The moanings in the forest, the loud
 brook,
 Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
 Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dor-
 hawk-whirr
 Awoke me not, but were a part of
 sleep,
 And voices in the distance calling to me
 And in my vision bidding me dream on,
 Like sounds without the twilight realm
 of dreams,
 Which wander round the bases of the
 hills,
 And murmur at the low-dropt eaves
 of sleep,
 Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
 The vision had fair prelude, in the end
 Opening on darkness, stately vesti-
 bules
 To caves and shows of Death: wheth-
 er the mind,

With some revenge—even to itself
 unknown,—
 Made strange division of its suffering
 With her, whom to have suffering
 view'd had been
 Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed
 Spirit,
 Being blunted in the Present, grew at
 length
 Prophetic and prescient of whate'er
 The Future had in store: or that
 which most
 Enchains belief, the sorrow of my
 spirit
 Was of so wide a compass it took in
 All I had loved, and my dull agony,
 Ideally to her transferr'd, became
 Anguish intolerable.

The day waned;
 Alone I sat with her: about my
 brow
 Her warm breath floated in the utter-
 ance
 Of silver-chorded tones: her lips
 were sunder'd
 With smiles of tranquil bliss, which
 broke in light
 Like morning from her eyes—her
 eloquent eyes,
 (As I have seen them many a hundred
 times)
 Fill'd all with pure clear fire, thro'
 mine down rain'd
 Their spirit-searching splendors. As
 a vision
 Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
 In damp and dismal dungeons under-
 ground,
 Confined on points of faith, when
 strength is shock'd
 With torment, and expectancy of
 worse
 Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged
 walls,
 All unawares before his half-shut
 eyes,
 Comes in upon him in the dead of
 night,
 And with the excess of sweetness and
 of awe,
 Makes the heart tremble, and the
 sight run over
 Upon his steely gyves; so those fair
 eyes
 Shone on my darkness, forms which
 ever stood
 Within the magic cirque of memory,
 Invisible but deathless, waiting still
 The edict of the will to reassume
 The semblance of those rare realities
 Of which they were the mirrors. Now
 the light
 Which was their life, burst through
 the cloud of thought
 Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room
 Within the summer-house of which I
 spake,
 Hung round with paintings of the sea,
 and one
 A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved
 prow
 Clambering, the mast bent and the
 ravin wind
 In her sail roaring. From the outer
 day,
 Betwixt the close-set ivies came a
 broad
 And solid beam of isolated light,
 Crowded with driving atomies, and
 fell
 Slanting upon that picture, from prime
 youth
 Well-known well-loved. She drew it
 long ago
 Forthgazing on the waste and open
 sea,
 One morning when the upblown bil-
 low ran
 Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I
 had pour'd
 Into the shadowing pencil's naked
 forms
 Color and life: it was a bond and seal
 Of friendship, spoken of with tearful
 smiles;
 A monument of childhood and of
 love;
 The poesy of childhood; my lost love
 Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it
 together
 In mute and glad remembrance, and
 each heart
 Grew closer to the other, and the eye
 Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing
 like
 The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-
 couch'd —
 A beauty which is death; when all at
 once
 That painted vessel, as with inner
 life,
 Began to heave upon that painted sea;
 An earthquake, my loud heart-beats,
 made the ground
 Reel under us, and all at once, soul,
 life
 And breath and motion, past and
 flow'd away
 To those unreal billows: round and
 round
 A whirlwind caught and bore us;
 mighty gyres
 Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-
 driven
 Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she
 shriek'd;
 My heart was cloven with pain; I
 wound my arms
 About her: we whirl'd giddily; the
 wind

Sung; but I clasp'd her without fear:
 her weight
 Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim
 eyes,
 And parted lips which drank her
 breath, down-hung
 The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from
 me flung
 Her empty phantom: all the sway and
 whirl
 Of the storm dropt to windless calm,
 and I
 Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and
 ever.

III.

I CAME one day and sat among the
 stones
 Strewn in the entry of the moaning
 cave;
 A morning air, sweet after rain, ran
 over
 The rippling levels of the lake, and
 blew
 Coolness and moisture and all smells
 of bud
 And foliage from the dark and drip-
 ping woods
 Upon my fever'd brows that shook
 and throb'd
 From temple unto temple. To what
 height
 The day had grown I know not. Then
 came on me
 The hollow tolling of the bell, and all
 The vision of the bier. As heretofore
 I walk'd behind with one who veil'd
 his brow.
 Methought by slow degrees the sullen
 bell
 Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the
 shore
 Sloped into louder surf: those that
 went with me,
 And those that held the bier before
 my face,
 Moved with one spirit round about
 the bay,
 Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd
 with these
 In marvel at that gradual change, I
 thought
 Four bells instead of one began to
 ring,
 Four merry bells, four merry marriage-
 bells,
 In clanging cadence jangling peal on
 peal —
 A long loud clash of rapid marriage-
 bells.
 Then those who led the van, and those
 in rear,
 Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bac-
 chanals
 Fled onward to the steeple in the
 woods:

I, too, was borne along and felt the
blast
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at
once
The front rank made a sudden halt;
the bells
Lapsed into frightful stillness; the
surge fell
From thunder into whispers; those six
maids
With shrieks and ringing laughter on
the sand
Threw down the bier; the woods upon
the hill
Waved with a sudden gust that sweep-
ing down
Took the edges of the pall, and blew
it far
Until it hung, a little silver cloud
Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my
heart
Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the
hand,
Waiting to see the settled countenance
Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading
flowers.
But she from out her death-like
chrysalis,
She from her bier, as into fresher
life,
My sister, and my cousin, and my
love,
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white —
her hair
Studded with one rich Provence rose
— a light
Of smiling welcome round her lips —
her eyes
And cheeks as bright as when she
climb'd the hill.
One hand she reach'd to those that
came behind,
And while I mused nor yet endured
to take
So rich a prize, the man who stood
with me
Stept gaily forward, throwing down
his robes,
And claspt her hand in his: again the
bells
Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy
surf
Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirl-
ing rout
Led by those two rush'd into dance,
and fled
Wind-footed to the steeple in the
woods,
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy
bowers,
And I stood sole beside the vacant
bier.
There, there, my latest vision — then
the event!

IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.¹*(Another speaks.)*

He flies the event: he leaves the event
to me:
Poor Julian — how he rush'd away;
the bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear
and heart —
But cast a parting glance at me, you
saw,
As who should say "Continue." Well
he had
One golden hour — of triumph shall I
say?
Solace at least — before he left his
home.

Would you had seen him in that
hour of his!
He moved thro' all of it majesti-
cally —
Restrain'd himself quite to the close —
but now —

Whether they *were* his lady's mar-
riage bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came
again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountains
and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would
go,
Would leave the land for ever, and
had gone
Surely, but for a whisper, "Go not
yet,"
Some warning — sent divinely — as it
seem'd
By that which follow'd — but of this
I deem
As of the visions that he told — the
event
Glanced back upon them in his after
life,
And partly made them — tho' he knew
it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not
look at her —
No not for months: but, when the
eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell,
and said,

¹ This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio. See Introduction, p. 545.

Would you could toll me out of life,
but found —
All softly as his mother broke it to
him —
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady
dead —
Dead — and had lain three days with-
out a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's
land
They never nail a dumb head up in
elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of
heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own
kin.

What did he then? not die: he is
here and hale —
Not plunge headforemost from the
mountain there,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap:
not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper
now,
Thought that he knew it. "This, I
stay'd for this;
O love, I have not seen you for so
long.
Now, now, will I go down into the
grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his
no more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the
dim vault,
And, making there a sudden light, be-
held
All round about him that which all
will be.
The light was but a flash, and went
again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her
face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which
the moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of
her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of
the vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,
to sleep,
To rest, to be with her — till the great
day

Peal'd on us with that music which
rights all,
And raised us hand in hand." And
kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once
was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving
hearts,
Hearts that had beat with such a love
as mine —
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
her —
He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till
helpless death
And silence made him bold — nay, but
I wrong him,
He revered his dear lady even in
death;
But, placing his true hand upon her
heart,
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd,
"not even death
Can chill you all at once:" then start-
ing, thought
His dreams had come again. "Do I
wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?" It beat — the
heart — it beat:
Faint — but it beat: at which his own
began
To pulse with such a vehemence that
it drown'd
The feebleness motion underneath his
hand.
But when at last his doubts were sat-
isfied,
He raised her softly from the sepul-
chre,
And, wrapping her all over with the
cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and
now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his
arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she
was born.

There the good mother's kindly min-
istering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye
that ask'd
"Where?" till the things familiar to
her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she
spoke
"Here! and how came I here?" and
learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I
think)
At once began to wander and to
wail,

"Ay, but you know that you must give me back :
 Send! bid him come ;" but Lionel was away —
 Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.
 "He casts me out," she wept, "and goes" — a wail
 That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
 Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
 Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
 At some precipitance in her burial.
 Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
 "Oh yes, and you," she said, "and none but you ?
 For you have given me life and love again,
 And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,
 And you shall give me back when he returns."
 "Stay then a little," answer'd Julian, "here,
 And keep yourself, none knowing, to yourself ;
 And I will do your will. I may not stay,
 No, not an hour ; but send me notice of him
 When he returns, and then will I return,
 And I will make a solemn offering of you
 To him you love." And faintly she replied,
 "And I will do *your* will, and none shall know."

Not know ? with such a secret to be known.
 But all their house was old and loved them both,
 And all the house had known the loves of both ;
 Had died almost to serve them any way,
 And all the land was waste and solitary :
 And then he rode away ; but after this,
 An hour or two, Camilla's travail came Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
 Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
 And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
 There fever seized upon him : myself was then
 Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour ;
 And sitting down to such a base repast,
 It makes me angry yet to speak of it —
 I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd

The moulder'd stairs (for everything was vile)
 And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
 Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
 Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
 A flat malarian world of reed and rush !
 But there from fever and my care of him
 Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.
 For while we roam'd along the dreary coast,
 And waited for her message, piece by piece
 I learnt the dearier story of his life ;
 And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,
 Found that the sudden wail his lady made
 Dwelt in his fancy : did he know her worth,
 Her beauty even ? should he not be taught,
 Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
 The value of that jewel he had to guard ?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
 I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul :
That makes the sequel pure ; tho' some of us
 Beginning at the sequel know no more.
 Not such am I : and yet I say the bird
 That will not hear my call, however sweet,
 But if my neighbor whistle answers him —
 What matter ? there are others in the wood.
 Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,
 Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
 A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers —
 Oh ! such dark eyes ! and not her eyes alone,
 But all from these to where she touch'd on earth,
 For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
 No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
 To greet us, her young hero in her arms !
 "Kiss him," she said. "You gave me life again.
 He, but for you, had never seen it once.
 His other father you ! Kiss him, and then
 Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!
 his own
 Sent such a flame into his face, I
 knew
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him
 there.

But he was all the more resolved to
 go,
 And sent at once to Lionel, praying
 him
 By that great love they both had
 borne the dead,
 To come and revel for one hour with
 him
 Before he left the land for evermore;
 And then to friends — they were not
 many — who lived
 Scatteringly about that lonely land
 of his,
 And bade them to a banquet of fare-
 wells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I
 never
 Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall
 From column on to column, as in a
 wood,
 Not such as here — an equatorial one,
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd;
 and beneath,
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of
 Art,
 Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
 knows when,
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten
 sun,
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of
 gloom,
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby — cups
 Where nymph and god ran ever round
 in gold —
 Others of glass as costly — some with
 gems
 Movable and resettable at will,
 And trebling all the rest in value —
 Ah heavens!
 Why need I tell you all? — suffice to
 say
 That whatsoever such a house as his,
 And his was old, has in it rare or fair
 Was brought before the guest: and
 they, the guests,
 Wonder'd at some strange light in
 Julian's eyes
 (I told you that he had his golden
 hour),
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his
 And that resolved self-exile from a
 land
 He never would revisit, such a feast
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
 than rich,
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the
 hall
 Two great funereal curtains, looping
 down,
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,
 About a picture of his lady, taken
 Some years before, and falling hid the
 frame.
 And just above the parting was a
 lamp:
 So the sweet figure folded round with
 night
 Seem'd stepping out of darkness with
 a smile.

Well then — our solemn feast — we
 ate and drank,
 And might — the wines being of such
 nobleness —
 Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
 And something weird and wild about
 it all:
 What was it? for our lover seldom
 spoke,
 Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever
 and anon
 A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
 Arising, show'd he drank beyond his
 use;
 And when the feast was near an end,
 he said:

"There is a custom in the Orient,
 friends —
 I read of it in Persia — when a man
 Will honor those who feast with him,
 he brings
 And shows them whatsoever he ac-
 counts
 Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
 Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
 This custom —"

Pausing here a moment, all
 The guests broke in upon him with
 meeting hands
 And cries about the banquet — "Beau-
 tiful!
 Who could desire more beauty at a
 feast?"

The lover answer'd, "There is more
 than one
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud me
 not
 Before my time, but hear me to the
 close.
 This custom steps yet further when
 the guest
 Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
 For after he hath shown him gems or
 gold,
 He brings and sets before him in rich
 guise
 That which is thrice as beautiful as
 these,

The beauty that is dearest to his heart —
 'O my heart's lord, would I could
 show you,' he says,
 'Ev'n my heart too.' And I propose
 to-night
 To show you what is dearest to my
 heart,
 And my heart too.

"But solve me first a doubt.
 I knew a man, nor many years ago;
 He had a faithful servant, one who
 loved
 His master more than all on earth
 beside.
 He falling sick, and seeming close on
 death,
 His master would not wait until he
 died,
 But bade his menials bear him from
 the door,
 And leave him in the public way to
 die.
 I knew another, not so long ago,
 Who found the dying servant, took
 him home,
 And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved
 his life.
 I ask you now, should this first master
 claim
 His service, whom does it belong to?
 him
 Who thrust him out, or him who saved
 his life?"

This question, so flung down before
 the guests,
 And balanced either way by each, at
 length
 When some were doubtful how the
 law would hold,
 Was handed over by consent of all
 To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of
 phrase.
 And he beginning languidly — his loss
 Weigh'd on him yet — but warming
 as he went,
 Glanced at the point of law, to pass
 it by,
 Affirming that as long as either lived,
 By all the laws of love and grateful-
 ness,
 The service of the one so saved was
 due
 All to the saver — adding, with a
 smile,
 The first for many weeks — a semi-
 smile
 As at a strong conclusion — "body
 and soul
 And life and limbs, all his to work his
 will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to
 me
 To bring Camilla down before them
 all.
 And crossing her own picture as she
 came,
 And looking as much lovelier as her-
 self
 Is lovelier than all others — on her
 head
 A diamond circlet, and from under
 this
 A veil, that seemed no more than
 gilded air,
 Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern
 gauze
 With seeds of gold — so, with that
 grace of hers,
 Slow-moving as a wave against the
 wind,
 That flings a mist behind it in the
 sun —
 And bearing high in arms the mighty
 babe,
 The younger Julian, who himself was
 crown'd
 With roses, none so rosy as himself —
 And over all her babe and her the
 jewels
 Of many generations of his house
 Sparkled and flash'd, for he had
 decked them out
 As for a solemn sacrifice of love —
 So she came in: — I am long in telling
 it,
 I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
 Sad, sweet, and strange together —
 floated in —
 While all the guests in mute amaze-
 ment rose —
 And slowly pacing to the middle
 hall,
 Before the board, there paused and
 stood, her breast
 Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her
 feet,
 Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
 But him she carried, him nor lights
 nor feast
 Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men;
 who cared
 Only to use his own, and staring wide
 And hungering for the gilt and
 jewell'd world
 About him, look'd, as he is like to
 prove,
 When Julian goes, the lord of all he
 saw.

"My guests," said Julian: "you
 are honor'd now
 Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold
 Of all my treasures the most beau-
 tiful,
 Of all things upon earth the dearest to
 me."

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,

Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble
too,

And heard him muttering, "So like,
so like;

She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers — O God,
so like!"

And then he suddenly ask'd her if
she were.

She shook, and cast her eyes down,
and was dumb.

And then some other question'd if she
came

From foreign lands, and still she did
not speak.

Another, if the boy were hers: but
she

To all their queries answer'd not a
word,

Which made the amazement more,
till one of them

Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!"
But his friend

Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at
least

The spectre that will speak if spoken
to.

Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her,
dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd
all:

"She is but dumb, because in her you
see

That faithful servant whom we spoke
about,

Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have here to-
night a guest

So bound to me by common love and
loss —

What! shall I bind him more? in his
behalf,

Shall I exceed the Persian, giving
him

That which of all things is the dearest
to me,

Not only showing? and he himself
pronounced

That my rich gift is wholly mine to
give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all
of you

Not to break in on what I say by
word

Or whisper, while I show you all my
heart."

And then began the story of his love

As here to-day, but not so wordily —
The passionate moment would not
suffer that —

Past thro' his visions to the burial;
thence

Down to this last strange hour in his
own hall;

And then rose up, and with him all
his guests

Once more as by enchantment; all
but he,

Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell
again,

And sat as if in chains — to whom he
said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for
your wife;

And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you
lost,

Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be none left here to bring
her back:

I leave this land for ever." Here he
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one
hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble
babe,

He slowly brought them both to
Lionel.

And there the widower husband and
dead wife

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that
rather seem'd

For some new death than for a life
renew'd;

Whereat the very babe began to wail;
At once they turn'd, and caught and
brought him in

To their charm'd circle, and, half kill-
ing him

With kisses, round him closed and
claspt again.

But Lionel, when at last he freed him-
self

From wife and child, and lifted up a
face

All over glowing with the sun of
life,

And love, and boundless thanks —
the sight of this

So frighted our good friend, that turn-
ing to me

And saying, "It is over: let us
go" —

There were our horses ready at the
doors —

We bade them no farewell, but mount-
ing these

He past for ever from his native land;
And I with him, my Julian, back to
mine.

BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS.

TO

ALFRED TENNYSON,

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

"WAIT a little," you say, "you are
sure it'll all come right,"
But the boy was born i' trouble, an'
looks so wan an' so white:
Wait! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't
to wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—
No, no, you are doing me
wrong!
Harry and I were married: the boy
can hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but
after my man was dead;
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an'
I work an' I wait to the end.
I am all alone in the world, an' you
are my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you
the tale o' my life.
When Harry an' I were children, he
call'd me his own little wife;
I was happy when I was with him, an'
sorry when he was away,
An' when we play'd together, I loved
him better than play;
He workt me the daisy chain—he
made me the cowslip ball,
He fought the boys that were rude,
an' I loved him better than all.
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at
home in disgrace,
I never could quarrel with Harry—I
had but to look in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset
Harry's kin, that had need
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he
sent, an' the father agreed;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire
farm for years an' for years;
I walked with him down to the quay,
poor lad, an' we parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we
heard them a-ringing the bell,
"I'll never love any but you, God
bless you, my own little Nell."

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an'
he came to harm;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt
with him up at the farm,
One had deceived her an' left her
alone with her sin an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry; the
girl was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was
little had grown so tall,
The men would say of the maids, "Our
Nelly's the flower of 'em all."
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught
myself all I could
To make a good wife for Harry, when
Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as
happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields "I'll
never love any but you";

"I'll never love any but you" the
morning song of the lark,
"I'll never love any but you" the night-
ingale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he
look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so
many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall—
that I might ha' forgot him
somehow—
For he thought—there were other
lads—he was fear'd to look
at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were
married o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all
as merry as May—
Those were the pleasant times, my
house an' my man were my
pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel
a-sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho'
he tried the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see
if work could be found;
An' he wrote, "I ha' six weeks' work,
little wife, so far as I know;
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an'
kiss you before I go."

X.

So I set to righting the house, for
wasn't he coming that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was
push'd in a corner away,
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a
letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand
in a hornets' nest.

XI.

"Sweetheart"—this was the letter—
this was the letter I read—
"You promised to find me work near
you, an' I wish I was dead—
Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you
haven't done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away,
an' I wish that I had."

XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant
times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my*
quarrel—the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him
the letter that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple
as any child,
"What can it matter, my lass, what I
did wi' my single life?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a
man to his wife;
An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst."
"Then," I said, "I'm none o' the
best."
An' he smiled at me, "Ain't you, my
love? Come, come, little wife,
let it rest!
The man isn't like the woman, no
need to make such a stir."
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I
said "You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an'
the same as before."
An' he didn't speak for a while, an'
he anger'd me more and more.
Then he patted my hand in his gentle
way, "Let bygones be!"
"Bygones! you kept yours hush'd," I
said, "when you married me!
By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*
—in her shame an' her sin—
You'll have her to nurse my child, if
I die o' my lying in!
You'll make her its second mother! I
hate her—an' I hate you!"
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better
ha' beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did,
when I were so crazy wi' spite,
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it'll
all come right."

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain,
an' I watch'd him, an' when he
came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was
all wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said "off wi' the wet," I
never said "on wi' the dry,"
So I knew my heart was hard, when
he came to bid me goodbye.
"You said that you hated me, Ellen,
but that isn't true, you know;
I am going to leave you a bit—you'll
kiss me before I go?"

XV.

"Going! you're going to her—kiss
her—if you will," I said,—
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must
ha' been light i' my head—
"I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!"
—I didn't know well what I
meant,

But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he
turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, "I've
gotten my work to do;
You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I
never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry
for what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go
to-night by the boat."

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I
thought of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he
was always kind to me.
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it
'ill all come right"—
An' the boat went down that night—
the boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind
over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O
mother, come out to me."
Why should he call me to-night, when
he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and
the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they
would spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the
storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but
am led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I
find myself drenched with the
rain.

III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what
was there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have num-
ber'd the bones, I have hidden
them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you*?
do you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As
the tree falls so must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been?
you—what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? you never
have spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady
—none of their spies—
But the night has crept into my heart,
and begun to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft,
what should *you* know of the
night,
The blast and the burning shame and
the bitter frost and the fright?
I have done it, while you were asleep—
you were only made for the day.
I have gather'd my baby together—
and now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to
sit by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I
have only an hour of life.
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before
he went out to die.
"They dared me to do it," he said,
and he never has told me a lie.
I whipt him for robbing an orchard
once when he was but a child—
"The farmer dared me to do it," he
said; he was always so wild—
And idle—and couldn't be idle—my
Willy—he never could rest.
The King should have made him a
soldier, he would have been
one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,
and they never would let him
be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the
mail, and he swore that he
would;
And he took no life, but he took one
purse, and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows—I'll
none of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth—but they kill'd him,
they kill'd him for robbing the
mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show
—we had always borne a good
name—
To be hang'd for a thief—and then
put away—isn't that enough
shame?
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide!
but they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could
stare at him, passing by.
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven
and horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer
who kill'd him and hang'd him
there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had
bid him my last goodbye;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell.
"O mother!" I heard him cry.
I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had
something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The
jailer forced me away.

X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that
cry of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they
fasten'd me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" — he call'd in the
dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me
— you know that I couldn't but
hear;
And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the
creatures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh 'was gone, but bone
of my bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers —
and you, will you call it a
theft? —
My baby, the bones that had suck'd
me, the bones that had laughed
and had cried —
Theirs? O no! they are mine — not
theirs — they had moved in my
side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the
bones? I kiss'd 'em, I buried
'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the
night by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I
laid him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up — they
would hang him again on the
cursed tree.
Sin? O yes — we are sinners, I know
— let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the
Lord's good will toward men —
"Full of compassion and mercy, the
Lord" — let me hear it again;

"Full of compassion and mercy —
long-suffering." Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder
— the Saviour lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap except
for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have
heard it in church — and the
last may be first.
Suffering — O long-suffering — yes, as
the Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the
wind and the shower and the
snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have
told you he never repented his
sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his
mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when
the storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and
the sea that 'ill moan like a
man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation —
it's all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I
shall not find him in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that
the Lord has look'd into my
care,
And He means me I'm sure to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul
if my boy be gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark — go,
go, you may leave me alone —
You never have borne a child — you
are just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think
that you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he
used but to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the
church and not from the gibbet
— for hark!
Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is
coming — shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon's in a cloud —
Good night. I am going. He
calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur
thou mun a' sights¹ to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa
'arty an' well.
"Cast awaäy an a disolut land wi' a
vartical soon²!"
Strange fur to goä fur to think what
saäilors a' seëan an' a' doon;
"Summat to drink — sa' 'ot?" I 'a
nowt but Adam's wine:
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to
the 'eät o' the line?

II.

"What's i' tha bottle a-stanning
theer?" I'll tell tha. Gin.
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun
goä fur it down to the inn.
Naay — fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw
tha was iver sa dry,
Thougits naw gin fro' the bottle theer,
an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when
wur it? back-end o' June,
Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well
as a fiddle i' tune:
I could fettle and clump owd booöts
and shoes wi' the best on 'em all,
As fur as fro' Thursby thurn hup to
Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.
We was busy as beëäs i' the bloom an'
as 'appy as 'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and
then I taäikes to the drink.

IV.

An' Iweänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw
I be hafe shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the
Plow, we could sing a good song
at the Plow;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd
an' hurted my huck,³
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes
slaäpe down i' the squad an'
the muck:

¹ The vowels *äi*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *craäin'*, *daäin'*, *whäi*, *äi* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

² The *oo* short, as in "wood." ³ Hip.

An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor — not
hafe ov a man, my lad —
Fur he scrawm'd an' scatted my faäce
like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa
mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-bang-
er,¹ an' raäted ma, 'Sottin' thy
braäins
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an'
hawmin' ² about i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn't
touch thy 'at to the Squire;
An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse
an' I seeä'd 'im a-gitten' o' fire;
But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hal-
lus as droonk as a king,
Foälsks' coostom flitted awaäy like a
kite wi' a brokken string.

V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälsks' cloäths
to keep the wolf fro' the door,
Eh but the moor she riled me, she
druv me to drink the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,
wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur
'id
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde,
and I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a
bull gotten loose at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an'
cryin' and teärin' 'er 'aäir,
An' I tummled athurt the cräidle an'
sweär'd as I'd break ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied
our Sally a kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs,
an' she an' the babby beäl'd,³
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did
nor a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I
seeä'd that our Sally went
laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur
dreädful ashaämed;
An' Sally wur sloomy⁴ an' draggle
taäil'd in an owd turn gown,
An' the babby's faäce wur'n't wesh'd
and the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty
an' neät an' sweeät,
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower
fro' 'eäd to feeät:

¹ Scold. ² Lounging.

³ Bellowed, cried out.

⁴ Sluggish, out of spirits.

An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied
 'er by Thursby thurn;
 Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of
 a Sunday at murn,
 Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-
 mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,
 An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e
 shined like a sparkle o' fire.
 "Doesn't tha see 'im," she axes, "fur
 I can see 'im?" an' I
 Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as
 danced in 'er pratty blue eye;
 An' I says "I mun gie tha a kiss," an'
 Sally says "Noä, thou moänt,"
 But I gied'er a kiss, an' then anoother,
 an' Sally says "doänt!"

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at
 fust she wur all in a tew,
 But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togethir
 like birds on a beugh;
 An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire
 an' the loove o' God fur men,
 An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally
 gied me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick
 like Saätan as fell
 Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire — thaw
 theer's naw drinkin' i' Hell;
 Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the
 wolf fro' the door,
 All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er
 as well as afor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blub-
 ber'd awaäy o' the bed —
 "Weänt niver do it naw moor;"
 an' Sally looëkt up an' she said,
 "I'll upowd i' tha weänt; thou'rt
 like the rest o' the men,
 Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till
 tha does it agëan.
 Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I
 knaws, as knaws tha sa well,
 That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im
 tha'll foller 'im slick into Hell."

XII.

"Naäy," says I, "fur I weänt goä
 sniffin' about the tap."
 "Weänt tha?" she says, an' mysen I
 thowt i' mysen "mayhap."
 "Noä:" an' I started awaäy like a
 shot, an' down to the Hinn,
 An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin'
 theer, yon big black bottle o'
 gin.

XIII.

"That caps owt,"² says Sally, an' saw
 she begins to cry,

¹ I'll uphold it.

² That's beyond everything.

But I puts it inter 'er 'ands 'an I says
 to 'er, "Sally," says I,
 "Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the
 Lord an' the power ov 'is
 Graäce,
 Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll looëk my
 hennemy strait i' the faäce,
 Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let
 ma looëk at 'im then,
 'E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an'
 'e's the Devil's oän sen."

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't
 do naw work an' all,
 Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an'
 poonch'd my 'and wi' the hawl,
 But she wur a power o' coomfut, an'
 sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
 An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till
 agëan I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk
 stood a-gawmin'¹ in,
 As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd
 istead of a quart o' gin;
 An' some on 'em said it wur watter —
 an' I wur chousin' the wife,
 Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur
 it nobbut to saäve my life;
 An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick
 ov 'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
 "Feäal thou this! thou can't graw
 this upo' watter!" says he.
 An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just
 as candles was lit,
 "Thou moänt do it," he says, "tha
 mun breäk 'im off bit by bit."
 "Thou'rt but a Methody-man," says
 Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,
 An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, "but
 I respecks tha fur that;"
 An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks
 down fro' the 'All to see,
 An' 'e spansk 'is 'and into mine, "fur
 I respecks tha," says 'e;
 An' coostom agëan draw'd in like a
 wind fro' far an' wide,
 And browt me the booöts to be cob-
 bled fro' hafe the countryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall
 stan to my dying daäy;
 I 'a gotten to loov 'im agëan in
 anoother kind of a waäy,
 Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I
 keeäps 'im cleän an' bright,
 Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts
 'im, an' puts 'im back i' the light.

¹ Staring vacantly.

XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a
quart? Naw doubt:
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi'
an' fowt it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I
cared to taaste,
But I moünt, my lad, and I weänt, fur
I'd feäl mysen cleän dis-
graäced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, "My
lass, when I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the
Divil's in 'im," said I.
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if
Sally be left aloän,
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke
'im afoor the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer — yon laädy a-steppin'
along the streeät,
Doesn't tha knaw 'er — sa pratty, an'
feät, an' neät, an' sweeät?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back,
thebbe ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce be as fresh as a
codlin wesh'd i' the dew.

XX.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we
be a-goin to dine,
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-pud-
din'¹ an' Adam's wine;
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun
goä fur it down to the Hinn,
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood,
noä, not fur Sally's oän kin.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard
Grenville lay,
And a pinnance, like a flutter'd bird,
came flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we
have sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard:
"Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my
ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I
must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we
fight with fifty-three?"

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I
know you are no coward;

¹ A pudding made with the first milk of
the cow after calving.

You fly them for a moment to fight
with them again.

But I've ninety men and more that
are lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I
left them, my Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the
devildoms of Spain."

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five
ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the
silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his
sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down
below;

For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that
they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for
the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to
work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till
the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving
upon the weather bow.

"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the
time this sun be set."

And Sir Richard said again: "We be
all good English men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon
Don or devil yet."

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and
we roar'd a hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into
the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck,
and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right
and half to the left were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro'
the long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd
down from their decks and
laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made
mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd

By their mountain-like San Philip
that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with
her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and
we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great San Philip
hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two
upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from
them all.

VIII.

But anon the great San Philip, she be-
thought herself and went
Having that within her womb that
had left her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and
they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with
their pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off
as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the
land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars
came out far over the summer
sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight
of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
with her battle-thunder and
flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
drew back with her dead and her
shame.
For some were sunk and many were
shatter'd, and so could fight us
no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like
this in the world before?

X.

For he said "Fight on! fight on!"
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the
short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he
had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was
dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in
the side and the head,
And he said "Fight on! fight on!"

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun
smiled out far over the summer
sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken
sides lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again,
for they fear'd that we still
could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for
life
In the crash of the cannonades and
the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold
were most of them stark and
cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent,
and the powder was all of it
spent;
And the masts and the rigging were
lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English
pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a
day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner —
sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into
the hands of Spain!"

XII.

And the gunner said "Ay, ay," but
the seamen made reply:
"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise,
if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to
strike another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they
yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their
flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old
Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with
their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he
cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith
like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is
bound to do:

With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard
Grenville die !”
And he fell upon their decks, and he
died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had
been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory
of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship
and his English few;
Was he devil or man ? He was devil
for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor
down into the deep,
And they mann'd the Revenge with a
swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and
long'd for her own ;
When a wind from the lands they had
ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the
weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a
great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is
raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their
sails and their masts and their
flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went
down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar ; and
by their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the
song,
Their favorite — which I call “The
Tables Turned.”
Evelyn begins it “O diviner Air.”

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust,
the glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing
showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air !

A sweet voice that — you scarce could
better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon
with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding
showers,
Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flow-
ers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light !

Marvellously like, their voices — and
themselves !
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the
other,
As one is somewhat graver than the
other —
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle,
whom
You count the father of your fortune,
longs
For this alliance : let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you ? for I
do not doubt
Being a watchful parent, you are
taken
With one or other : tho' sometimes I
fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a
doubt
Between the two — which must not be
— which might
Be death to one : they both are beau-
tiful :
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust
it : she ?
No ! but the paler and the graver,
Edith.
Woo her and gain her then : no
wavering, boy !
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so
well.
For love will go by contrast, as by
likes.

No sisters ever prized each other
more.
Not so : their mother and her sister
loved
More passionately still.

But that my best
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes
it,
And that I know you worthy every-
way
To be my son, I might, perchance, be
loath
To part them, or part from them : and
yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands
in your view

From this bay window — which our
house has held
Three hundred years — will pass col-
laterally.

My father with a child on either
knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as
his own
Were silver, "get them wedded"
would he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd
him "why?"
Ay, why? said he, "for why should I
go lame?"
Then told them of his wars, and of
his wound.
For see — this wine — the grape from
whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of
Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the
terrible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at
Waterloo,
And caught the laming bullet. He
left me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its
youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion.
Come!
Here's to your happy union with my
child!

Yet must you change your name:
no fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-
time
By change of feather: for all that,
my boy,
Some birds are sick and sullen when
they moult.
An old and worthy name! but mine
that stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too
Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name — no fault of
mine.
Once more — a happier marriage than
my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the
plain.
The highway running by it leaves a
breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long
ago,
One bright May morning in a world
of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The ærial poplar wave, an amber
spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landau-
let

Whirl'd by, which, after it had past
me, show'd
Turning my way, the loveliest face
on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhap-
piness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem — with goodly rhyme and
reason for it —
Possible — at first glimpse, and for a
face
Gone in a moment — strange. Yet
once, when first
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm — one
lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I
loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-
sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all
the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face
for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as
well.
For look you here — the shadows are
too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment
make
The veriest beauties of the work
appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes
frown: the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith — no, the other, — both
indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro'
sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd — to be
found
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the
tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping
beechen boughs
Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landau-
let
For ever past me by: when one quick
peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glim-
mering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a
cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face
again,
My Rosalind in this Arden — Edith
— all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty,
happiness,

And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these
I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my
day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! was I content?
Ay — no, not quite; for now and then
I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the
bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith — that a man's
ideal
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with
Plato's God,
Not findable here — content, and not
content,
In some such fashion as a man may
be
That having had the portrait of his
friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and
says,
"Good! very like! — not altogether he."

As yet I had not bound myself by
words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love me. Then came the day
when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts
were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts
of all —
Not I that day of Edith's love or
mine —
Had braced my purpose to declare
myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a
word.
I spoke it — told her of my passion,
seen
And lost and found again, had got so
far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids
fell — I heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at
the doors —
On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health
again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd
— there,
There was the face, and altogether
she.
The mother fell about the daughter's
neck,

The sisters closed in one another's
arms,
Their people throng'd about them
from the hall,
And in the thick of question and
reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel
face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;
I could not free myself in honor —
bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counterpressures of the yielded
hand
That timorously and faintly echoed
mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of
her eyes
Upon me when she thought I did not
see —
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but
could I wed her
Loving the other? do her that great
wrong?
Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-
morn?
Had I not known where Love, at first
a fear,
Grew after marriage to full height
and form?
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister
there —
Brother-in-law — the fiery nearness of
it —
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood —
What end but darkness could ensue
from this
For all the three? So Love and Honor
jarr'd
Tho' Love and Honor join'd to raise
the full
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up
and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:
"My mother bids me ask" (I did not
tell you —
A widow with less guile than many a
child.
God help the wrinkled children that
are Christ's
As well as the plump cheek — she
wrought us harm,
Poor soul, not knowing) "are you
ill?" (so ran
The letter) "you have not been here
of late.
You will not find me here. At last I
go
On that long-promised visit to the
North.
I told your wayside story to my
mother

And Evelyn. She remembers you.
Farewell.

Pray come and see my mother. Al-
most blind

With ever-growing cataract, yet she
thinks

She sees you when she hears. Again
farewell."

Cold words from one I had hoped to
warm so far

That I could stamp my image on her
heart!

"Pray come and see my mother, and
farewell."

Cold, but as welcome as free airs of
heaven

After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,
strange!

What dwarfs are men! my strangled
vanity

Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vex't
myself

And all in vain for her—cold heart
or none—

No bride for me. Yet so my path
was clear

To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former
suit,

Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.

And Edith would be bridesmaid on
the day.

But on that day, not being all at
ease,

I from the altar glancing back upon
her,

Before the first "I will" was utter'd,
saw

The bridesmaid pale, statue-like, pas-
sionless—

"No harm, no harm" I turn'd again,
and placed

My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke
no word,

She wept no tear, but round my
Evelyn clung

In utter silence for so long, I thought
"What, will she never set her sister
free?"

We left her, happy each in each,
and then,

As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have tor-
rents, lakes,

Hills, the great things of Nature and
the fair,

To lift us as it were from common-
place,

And help us to our joy. Better have
sent

Our Edith thro' the glories of the
earth,

To change with her horizon, if true
Love

Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would
not live

Save that I think this gross hard-
seeming world

Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs
our gains.

For on the dark night of our mar-
riage-day

The great Tragedian, that had
quench'd herself

In that assumption of the bridesmaid
— she

That loved me—our true Edith—
her brain broke

With over-acting, till she rose and
fled

Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn
rain

To the deaf church—to be let in—
to pray

Before that altar—so I think; and
there

They found her beating the hard Pro-
testant doors.

She died and she was buried ere we
knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak.

At once
The bright quick smile of Evelyn,
that had sunn'd

The morning of our marriage, past
away:

And on our home-return the daily
want

Of Edith in the house, the garden,
still

Haunted us like her ghost; and by
and by,

Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain

innocence
Of nature, or desire that her lost

child
Should earn from both the praise of
heroism,

The mother broke her promise to the
dead,

And told the living daughter with
what love

Edith had welcomed my brief wooing
of her,

And all her sweet self-sacrifice and
death.

Henceforth that mystic bond be-
twixt the twins—

Did I not tell you they were twins ?
 —prevail'd
 So far that no caress could win my
 wife
 Back to that passionate answer of full
 heart
 I had from her at first. Not that her
 love,
 Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power
 of love,
 Had lessen'd, but the mother's gar-
 rulous wail
 For ever woke the unhappy Past
 again,
 Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to
 be my bride,
 Put forth cold hands between us, and
 I fear'd
 The very fountains of her life were
 chill'd;
 So took her thence, and brought her
 here, and here
 She bore a child, whom reverently we
 call'd
 Edith; and in the second year was
 born
 A second — this I named from her
 own self,
 Evelyn; then two weeks — no more
 — she joined,
 In and beyond the grave, that one
 she loved.
 Now in this quiet of declining life,
 Thro' dreams by night and trances of
 the day,
 The sisters glide about me hand in
 hand,
 Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
 One from the other, no, nor care to
 tell
 One from the other, only know they
 come,
 They smile upon me, till, remembering
 all
 The love they both have borne me,
 and the love
 I bore them both — divided as I am
 From either by the stillness of the
 grave —
 I know not which of these I love the
 best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own
 true eyes
 Are traitors to her; our quick Ev-
 elyn —
 The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they
 talk,
 And not without good reason, my
 good son —
 Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold
 them both
 Dearest of all things — well, I am not
 sure —
 But if there lie a preference either way,
 And in the rich vocabulary of Love

"Most dearest" be a true superla-
 tive —
 I think *I* likewise love your Edith
 most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.¹

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur
 New Squire coom'd last night.
 Butter an' heggs — yis — yis. I'll
 goâ wi' tha back: all right;
 Butter I warrants be prime, an' I war-
 rants the heggs be as well,
 Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya
 breäks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass
 o' cowslip wine!
 I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as
 thaw they was gells o' mine,
 Fur then we was all es one, the Squire
 an' 'is darters an' me,
 Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I
 niver not took to she:
 But Nelly, the last of the clutch² I
 liked 'er the fust on 'em all,
 Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es
 died o' the fever at fall:
 An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord,
 but Miss Annie she said it wur
 draäins,
 Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an'
 arn'd naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
 Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer,
 I han't gotten none!
 Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in
 'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha
 dosn' know what that be?
 But I knows the law, I does, for the
 lawyer ha tow'd it me.
 "When theer's naw 'eä'd to a 'Ouse by
 the fault o' that ere maäle —
 The gells they counts fur nowt, and
 the next un he taäkes the taäil."

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha
 tell ony harm on 'im lass? —
 Naay sit down — naw 'urry — sa
 cowl! — hev another glass!
 Straänge an' cowl fur the time! we
 may happen a fall o' snaw —
 Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm,
 but I likes to know.

¹ See note to "Northern Cobbler."

² A brood of chickens.

An' I 'oaps es 'e beänt boooklarn'd:
but 'e dosn' not coom fro' the
shere;
We' anew o' that wi' the Squire, an'
we haätes boooklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an'
niver lookt arter the land —
Whoäts or turmuts or taätes — e' 'ed
hallus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh
upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what's booöks? thou
knows thebbe neyther 'ere nor
theer.

VI.

An' the gells, they hadn't naw taäils,
an' the lawyer he tow'd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he
couldn't cut down a tree!
“Drat the trees,” says I, to be sewer I
haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land an'
they sucks the muck fro' the
grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an'
gied to the tramps goin' by —
An' all-o' the wust i' the parish — wi'
hoffens a drop in 'is eye.
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her
awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their
grooms, an' was 'untin' arter
the men,
An' hallus a-dallack¹ an' dizen'd out,
an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,
While 'e sit like a graät glimmer-
gowk² wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is
noäse,
An' 'is noäse sa grufted wi' snuff as it
couldn't be scroob'd awaäy,
Fur atween 'is reädin' an' writin' 'e
snifft up a box in a daäy,
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor
arter the birds wi' 'is gun,
An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e
leäved it to Charlie 'is son,
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds,
but Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,
For 'e warn't not burn to the land, an'
'e didn't take kind to it like;
But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry³ owd
book thutty pound an' moor,
An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn
sen, sa I knaw'd es 'e'd coom
to be poor;
An' 'e gied — I be fear'd to tell tha 'ow
much — fur an owd scratted
stoän,

¹ Overdressed in gay colors.² Owl.³ Filthy.

An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land
an' 'e got a brown pot an' a
boän,
An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't
goä, wi' good gowd o' the
Queen,
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt
an' which was a shaame to be
seen;
But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e
niver not seed to owt,
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks,
an' booöks, as thou knaws,
beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she
lived she kep 'em all clear,
Thaw es long es she lived I never hed
none of 'er darters 'ere;
But arter she died we was all es one,
the childer an' me,
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an'
offens we hed 'em to tea.
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses
'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,
An' the Missis's talk'd o' the lasses. —
I'll tell tha some o' these daäys.
Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck
oop, like 'er mother afoor —
'Er an' 'er blessed darter — they niver
derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till
'e'd gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's
letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son,
an' 'e says to 'im, meek as a
mouse,
“Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or
the gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I
'oäps es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil
I may saäve mysen yit.”

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e
sweärs, an' 'e says to im “Noä.
I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an'
be dang'd if I iver let goä!
Coom! coom! feyther,” 'e says, “why
shouldn't thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe
worth their weight i' gowd.”

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd
'em, belong'd to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i'
the middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd
nigh to nowt at the saäle,

And Squire were at Charlie ageän to
git 'im to cut off 'is tääl.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes — 'e
were that outdacious at oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell
wi' a small-tooth coämb —
Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an'
droonk wi' the farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all — an' 'e
wouldn't cut off the tääl.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and
a thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the
Maäy es I see'd it to-year —
Theerabouts Charlie joompt — and it
gied me a scare tocker night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i'
the derk, fur it looökt sa white.
"Billy," says 'e, "hev a joompt!" —
thaw the banks o' the beck be
sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un,
thaw niver a hair wur awry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an'
Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,
Sa theer wur a hend o' the tääl, fur
'e lost 'is tääl i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is tääl wur lost an' 'is booöks wur
gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but
'e niver not lift oop 'is 'eäd:
Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled,
fur 'e hedn't naw friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried togethir,
an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the
mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reäds o' a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o'
the tother side;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord,
howsiver they praäy'd an'
praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves
their debts to be paäid.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo'
poor owd Squire i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur
they weant niver coom to naw
good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt
awaäy wi' a hofferlad,
An' nawbody 'eard on 'er sin, sa o'
coorse she be gone to the bad!
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet-
'arts she niver 'ed none —

Straänge an' unheppen¹ Miss Lucy!
we naämed her "Dot an' gaw
one!"

An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics,
wi'out ony harm i' the legs,
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'ead
as bald as one o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as
big i' the mouth as a cow,
An' saw she mun hammergrate,² lass,
or she weänt git a maäte ony-
how!

An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me
afor my awn foälks to my
faäce

"A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev
to be larn'd her awn plaäce,"
Hes for Miss Hannie the heldest hes
now be a grawin sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt
not fit to be towld!

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd
Miss Annie to saäy
Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es
soon es they went awaäy,
Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they
went, an' our Nelly she gied me
'er 'and,
Fur I'd ha done owt for the Squire an'
'is gells es belong'd to the land;
Booöks, es I said afor, thebbe ney-
ther 'ere nor theer!
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs
fur huppuds o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd,
sa I hallus deal'd wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an'
they knaw'd what a hegg wur
an' all;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they
wasn't that eäsy to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they
laäid big heggs es tha seesas;
An' I niver puts saäme³ i' my butter,
they does it at Willis's farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine —
tweänt do tha na harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is tääl in
'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone;
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter
my nightcap wur on;
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he
coom'd last night sa laäte —
Pluksh!!!⁴ the hens i' the peäs! why
didn't tha hesp tha gaäte?

¹ Ungainly, awkward. ² Emigrate.

³ Lard.

⁴ A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands
to scare trespassing fowl.

IN THE CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

Our doctor had call'd in another, I
never had seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when
I saw him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of
France and of other lands —
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest,
big merciless hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes,
but they said too of him
He was happier using the knife than
in trying to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he
look'd so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who
would break their jests on the
dead,
And mangle the living dog that had
loved him and fawn'd at his
knee —
Drench'd with the hellish ooral — that
ever such things should be!

II.

Here was a boy — I am sure that some
of our children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the
smile, and the comforting eye —
Here was a boy in the ward, every
bone seem'd out of its place —
Caught in a mill and crush'd — it was
all but a hopeless case:
And he handled him gently enough;
but his voice and his face were
not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he
had seen it and made up his
mind,
And he said to me roughly "The lad
will need little more of your
care."
"All the more need," I told him, "to
seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;
They are all his children here, and I
pray for them all as my own:"
But he turn'd to me, "Ay, good woman,
can prayer set a broken bone?"
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but
I know that I heard him say
"All very well — but the good Lord
Jesus has had his day."

III.

Had? has it come? It has only
dawn'd. It will come by and
by.
O how could I serve in the wards if the
hope of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and
the loathsome smells of disease

But that He said "Ye do it to me,
when ye do it to these"?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this
ward where the younger chil-
dren are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our dar-
ling, our meek little maid;
Empty you see just now! We have
lost her who loved her so
much —
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sen-
sitive plant to the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often
moved me to tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have
found in a child of her years —
Nay you remember our Emmie; you
used to send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, play
with 'em, talk to 'em hours
after hours!
They that can wander at will where the
works of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from
a cowslip out of the fields;
Flowers to these "spirits in prison"
are all they can know of the
spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards
like the waft of an Angel's
wing;
And she lay with a flower in one hand
and her thin hands crost on her
breast —
Wan, but as pretty as heart can de-
sire, and we thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping — so quiet, our doc-
tor said "Poor little dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll
never live thro' it, I fear."

V.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as
far as the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward; the child
didn't see I was there.

VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been
so grieved and so vex't!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she
call'd from her cot to the next,
"He says I shall never live thro' it, O
Annie, what shall I do?"
Annie consider'd. "If I," said the
wise little Annie, "was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to
help me, for, Emmie, you see,
It's all in the picture there; 'Little
children should come to me.'
(Meaning the print that you gave us,
I find that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus
 with children about his knees.)
 "Yes, and I will," said Emmie, "but
 then if I call to the Lord,
 How should he know that it's me?
 such a lot of beds in the ward!"
 That was a puzzle for Annie. Again
 she consider'd and said:
 "Emmie, you put out your arms, and
 you leave 'em outside on the
 bed—
 The Lord has so *much* to see to! but,
 Emmie, you tell it him plain,
 It's the little girl with her arms lying
 out on the counterpane."

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—
 I could not watch her for four—
 My brain had begun to reel—I felt I
 could do it no more.
 That was my sleeping-night, but I
 thought that it never would
 pass.
 There was a thunderclap once, and a
 clatter of hail on the glass,
 And there was a phantom cry that I
 heard as I tost about,
 The motherless bleat of a lamb in the
 storm and the darkness with-
 out;
 My sleep was broken beside with
 dreams of the dreadful knife
 And fears for our delicate Emmie who
 scarce would escape with her
 life;
 Then in the gray of the morning it
 seem'd she stood by me and
 smiled,
 And the doctor came at his hour, and
 we went to see to the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we
 believed her asleep again—
 Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying
 out on the counterpane;
 Say that His day is done! Ah why
 should we care what they say?
 The Lord of the children had heard
 her, and Emmie had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,
 which lived
 True life, live on—and if the fatal
 kiss,
 Born of true life and love, divorce
 thee not
 From earthly love and life—if what
 we call

The spirit flash not all at once from
 out
 This shadow into Substance—then
 perhaps
 The mellow'd murmur of the people's
 praise
 From thine own State, and all our
 breadth of realm,
 Where Love and Longing dress thy
 deeds in light,
 Ascends to thee; and this March
 morn that sees
 Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-
 bloom
 Break thro' the yews and cypress of
 thy grave,
 And thine Imperial mother smile
 again,
 May send one ray to thee! and who
 can tell—
 Thou—England's England-loving
 daughter—thou
 Dying so English thou wouldst have
 her flag
 Borne on thy coffin—where is he can
 swear
 But that some broken gleam from our
 poor earth
 May touch thee, while remembering
 thee, I lay
 At thy pale feet this ballad of the
 deeds
 Of England, and her banner in the
 East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season,
 O banner of Britain, hast thou
 Floated in conquering battle or flap-
 to the battle-cry!
 Never with mightier glory than when
 we had rear'd thee on high
 Flying at top of the roofs in the
 ghastly siege of Lucknow—
 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard,
 but ever we raised thee anew,
 And ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended
 the hold that we held with our
 lives—
 Women and children among us, God
 help them, our children and
 wives!
 Hold it we might—and for fifteen
 days or for twenty at most.
 "Never surrender, I charge you, but
 every man die at his post!"
 Voice of the dead whom we loved,
 our Lawrence the best of the
 brave:

Cold were his brows when we kiss'd
him — we laid him that night
in his grave.

"Every man die at his post!" and
there hail'd on our houses and
halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and
death from their cannon-balls,

Death in our innermost chamber, and
death at our slight barricade,

Death while we stood with the mus-
ket, and death while we stoopt
to the spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to
the wounded, for often there
fell,

Striking the hospital wall, crashing
thro' it, their shot and their
shell,

Death — for their spies were among
us, their marksmen were told
of our best,

So that the brute bullet broke thro'
the brain that could think for
the rest;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads,
and bullets would rain at our
feet —

Fire from ten thousand at once of the
rebels that girdled us round —

Death at the glimpse of a finger from
over the breadth of a street,

Death from the heights of the mosque
and the palace, and death in
ground!

Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine!
down, down! and creep thro'
the hole!

Keep the revolver in hand! you can
hear him — the murderous mole!

Quiet, ah! quiet — wait till the point
of the pickaxe be thro'!

Click with the pick, coming nearer
and nearer again than before —

Now let it speak, and you fire, and the
dark pioneer is no more;

And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew!

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many
times, and it chanced on a day
Soon as the blast of that underground
thunderclap echo'd away,

Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur
like so many fiends in their
hell —

Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on
volley, and yell upon yell —

Fiercely on all the defences our myr-
iad enemy fell.

What have they done? where is it?
Out yonder. Guard the Redan!

Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the
Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran

Surging and swaying all round us, as
ocean on every side

Plunges and heaves at a bank that is
daily drown'd by the tide —

So many thousands that if they be bold
enough, who shall escape?

Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall
know we are soldiers and men!

Ready! take aim at their leaders —
their masses are gapp'd with
our grape —

Backward they reel like the wave, like
the wave flinging forward again,

Flying and foil'd at the last by the
handful they could not subdue;

And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were
English in heart and in limb,

Strong with the strength of the race
to command, to obey, to endure,

Each of us fought as if hope for the
garrison hung but on him;

Still — could we watch at all points?
we were every day fewer and
fewer.

There was a whisper among us, but
only a whisper that past:

"Children and wives — if the tigers
leap into the fold unawares —

Every man die at his post — and the
foe may outlive us at last —

Better to fall by the hands that they
love, than to fall into theirs!"

Roar upon roar in a moment two
mines by the enemy sprung

Clove into perilous chasms our walls
and our poor palisades.

Rifleman, true is your heart, but be
sure that your hand be as true!

Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed
are your flank fusillades —

Twice do we hurl them to earth from
the ladders to which they had
clung,

Twice from the ditch where they shel-
ter we drive them with hand-
grenades;

And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

V.

Then on another wild morning another
wild earthquake out-tore

Cléan from our lines of defence ten or
twelve good paces or more.

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden
there from the light of the
sun —

One has leapt up on the beach, crying
out: "Follow me, follow me!" —

Mark him — he falls! then another,
and *him* too, and down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who
can tell but the traitors had
won?

Boardings and rafters and doors — an
embrasure! make way for the
gun!

Now double-charge it with grape! It
is charged and we fire, and they
run.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let
the dark face have his due!

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who
fought with us, faithful and few,

Fought with the bravest among us,
and drove them, and smote
them, and slew,

That ever upon the topmost roof our
banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and
not what we do. We can fight!

But to be soldier all day and be senti-
nel all thro' the night —

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,
their lying alarms,

Bugles and drums in the darkness, and
shoutings and soundings to
arms,

Ever the labor of fifty that had to be
done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one
should be left alive,

Ever the day with its traitorous death
from the loopholes around,

Ever the night with its coffinless
corpse to be laid in the ground,

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a
deluge of cataract skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and in-
finite torment of flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blow-
ing over an English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound
that *would* not be heal'd,

Lopping away of the limb by the pit-
iful-pitiless knife, —

Torture and trouble in vain, — for it
never could save us a life.

Valor of delicate women who tended
the hospital bed,

Horror of women in travail among
the dying and dead,

Grief for our perishing children, and
never a moment for grief,

Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering
hopes of relief,

Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd
for all that we knew —

Then day and night, day and night,
coming down on the still-shat-
ter'd walls

Millions of musket-bullets, and thou-
sands of cannon-balls —

But ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true

what was told by the scout,
Outram and Havelock breaking their
way through the fell mutineers?

Surely the pibroch of Europe is ring-
ing again in our ears!

All on a sudden the garrison utter a
jubilant shout,

Havelock's glorious Highlanders an-
swer with conquering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them,
women and children come out,

Blessing the wholesome white faces
of Havelock's good fusileers,

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the
Highlander wet with their tears!

Dance to the pibroch! — saved! we are
saved! — is it you? is it you?

Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved
by the blessing of Heaven!

"Hold it for fifteen days!" we have
held it for eighty-seven!

And ever aloft on the palace roof the
old banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD
COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere
hereabout

To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded
one, I trow —

I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless
stone;

I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer,
or none,

For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
But God is with me in this wilderness,

These wet black passes and foam-
churning chasms —

And God's free air, and hope of bet-
ter things.

I would I knew their speech; not
now to glean,

Not now — I hope to do it — some
scatter'd ears,

Some ears for Christ in this wild field
of Wales —

But, bread, merely for bread. This
tongue that wagg'd

They said with such heretical arro-
gance

Against the proud archbishop Arun-
del —

So much God's cause was fluent in it
— is here

But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;

"Bara!" — what use? The Shepherd,
 when I speak,
 Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hard
 "Dim Saesneg" passes, wroth at
 things of old —
 No fault of mine. Had he God's word
 in Welsh
 He might be kindlier: happily come
 the day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethle-
 hem
 In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
 Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
 Least, for in thee the word was born
 again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living
 word,
 Who whilome spakest to the South in
 Greek
 About the soft Mediterranean shores,
 And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
 As good need was — thou hast come
 to talk our isle.
 Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
 Must learn to use the tongues of all
 the world.
 Yet art thou thine own witness that
 thou bringest
 Not peace, a sword, a fire.

What did he say,
 My frightened Wiclif-preacher whom I
 crost
 In flying hither? that one night a
 crowd
 Throng'd the waste field about the
 city gates:
 The king was on them suddenly with
 a host.
 Why there? they came to hear their
 preacher. Then
 Some cried on Cobham, on the good
 Lord Cobham;
 Ay, for they love me! but the king —
 nor voice
 Nor finger raised against him — took
 and hang'd,
 Took, hang'd and burnt — how many
 — thirty-nine —
 Call'd it rebellion — hang'd, poor
 friends, as rebels
 And burn'd alive as heretics! for
 your Priest
 Labels — to take the king along with
 him —
 All heresy, treason: but to call men
 traitors
 May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,
 Red in thy birth, redder with house-
 hold war,
 Now reddest with the blood of holy
 men,
 Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster —

If somewhere in the North, as Rumor
 sang
 Fluttering the hawks of this crown-
 lusting line —
 By firth and loch thy silver sister
 grow,¹
 That were my rose, there my alle-
 giance due.
 Self-starved, they say — nay, mur-
 der'd, doubtless dead.
 So to this king I cleaved: my friend
 was he,
 Once my fast friend: I would have
 given my life
 To help his own from scathe, a thou-
 sand lives
 To save his soul. He might have
 come to learn
 Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly
 Priests
 Who fear the king's hard common-
 sense should find
 What rotten piles uphold their mason-
 work,
 Urge him to foreign war. O had he
 will'd
 I might have stricken a lusty stroke
 for him,
 But he would not; far liever led my
 friend
 Back to the pure and universal
 church,
 But he would not: whether that heir-
 less flaw
 In his throne's title make him feel so
 frail,
 He leans on Antichrist; or that his
 mind,
 So quick, so capable in soldiership,
 In matters of the faith, alas the while!
 More worth than all the kingdoms of
 this world,
 Runs in the rut, a coward to the
 Priest.

Burnt — good Sir Roger Acton, my
 dear friend!
 Burnt too, my faithful preacher,
 Beverley!
 Lord give thou power to thy two wit-
 nesses!
 Lest the false faith make merry over
 them!
 Two — nay but thirty-nine have risen
 and stand,
 Dark with the smoke of human sacri-
 fice,
 Before thy light, and cry continually —
 Cry — against whom?
 Him, who should bear the sword
 Of Justice — what! the kingly, kindly
 boy;
 Who took the world so easily hereto-
 fore,

¹ Richard II.

My boon companion, tavern-fellow —
him
Who gibed and japed — in many a
merry tale
That shook our sides — at Pardoners
Summoners,
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour
and the wine
Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East ?

Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and
fling

Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and harlotry — thy shame,
and mine,

Thy comrade — than to persecute the
Lord,

And play the Saul that never will be
Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred
Arundel

Dooms our unlicensed preacher to
the flame,

The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his
clerks

Into the suburb — their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness,
molten

Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul — a shame to speak of
them —

Among the heathen —

Sanctuary granted
To pandit, thief, assassin — yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat —

denied to him,

Who finds the Saviour in his mother
tongue.

The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung
down to swine —

The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who
will come,

God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy
Gospel, meant

To course and range thro' all the
world, should be

Tether'd to these dead pillars of the
Church —

Rather than so, if thou wilt have
it so,

Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack
heart, and life

Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how
long,

O Lord, how long!

My friend should meet me here.
Here is the copse, the fountain and —

a Cross!

To thee, dead wood, I bow not head
nor knees.

Rather to thee, green bosage, work
of God,

Black holly, and white-flower'd way-
faring-tree!

Rather to thee, thou living water,
drawn

By this good Wielif mountain down
from heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native
tongue —

No Latin — He that thirsteth, come
and drink!

 Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking
me

To worship Holy Cross! I spread
mine arms,

God's work, I said, a cross of flesh
and blood

And holier. That was heresy. (My
good friend

By this time should be with me.)
"Images?"

"Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried." "Heresy. —

Penance?" "Fast,

Hairshirt and scourge — nay, let a
man repent,

Do penance in his heart, God hears
him." "Heresy —

Not shriven, not saved?" "What
profits an ill Priest

Between me and my God? I would
not spurn

Good counsel of good friends, but
shrive myself

No, not to an Apostle." "Heresy."
(My friend is long in coming.) "Pil-

grimages?"

Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-
dances, vice.

The poor man's money gone to fat the
friar.

Who reads of begging saints in Scrip-
ture?" — "Heresy" —

(Hath he been here — not found me
— gone again?)

Have I mislearnt our place of meet-
ing?) "Bread —

Bread left after the blessing?" how
they stared,

That was their main test-question —
glared at me!

"He veil'd himself in flesh, and now
He veils

His flesh in bread, body and bread
together."

Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd
wolves,

"No bread, no bread. God's body!"
Archbishop, Bishop,

Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers,
Parish-clerks —

"No bread, no bread!" — "Authority
of the Church,

Power of the keys!"—Then I, God
help me, I

So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two
whole days—

I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever
since

Sylvester shed the venom of world-
wealth

Into the church, had only prov'n
themselves

Poisoners, murderers. Well—God
pardon all—

Me, them, and all the world—yea,
that proud Priest,

That mock-meek mouth of utter Anti-
christ,

That traitor to King Richard and the
truth,

Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
Amen!

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of
life

Be by me in my death.

Those three! the fourth
Was like the Son of God! Not burnt
were they.

On *them* the smell of burning had not
past.

That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel

What miracle could turn? *He* here
again,

He thwarting their traditions of Him-
self,

He would be found a heretic to Him-
self,

And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as
much as this,

For freedom, or the sake of those they
loved,

Or some less cause, some cause far
less than mine;

For every other cause is less than
mine.

The moth will singe her wings, and
singed return,

Her love of light quenching her fear
of pain—

How now, my soul, we do not heed the
fire?

Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stom-
ach'd! faint as I am,

God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my
head.

Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for
it then!

Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well
disguised,

I knew thee not. Hast thou brought
bread with thee?

I have not broken bread for fifty hours.

None? I am damn'd already by the
Priest

For holding there was bread where
bread was none—

No bread. My friends await me yon-
der? Yes.

Lead on then. *Up* the mountain?
Is it far?

Not far. Climb first and reach me
down thy hand.

I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.¹

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised
brows I read

Some wonder at our chamber orna-
ments.

We brought this iron from our isles
of gold.

Does the king know you deign to
visit him

Whom once he rose from off his
throne to greet

Before his people, like his brother
king?

I saw your face that morning in the
crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not
then

So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd
herself

To meet me, roar'd my name; the
king, the queen

Bade me be seated, speak, and tell
them all

The story of my voyage, and while I
spoke

The crowd's roar fell as at the "Peace,
be still!"

And when I ceased to speak, the king,
the queen,

Sank from their thrones, and melted
into tears,

And knelt, and lifted hand and heart
and voice

In praise to God who led me thro' the
waste.

And then the great "Laudamus" rose
to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the
Ocean! chains

For him who gave a new heaven, a
new earth,

As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the
kings

Of Spain than all their battles! chains
for him

¹ He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

Who push'd his prows into the setting
 sun,
 And made West East, and sail'd the
 Dragon's mouth,
 And came upon the Mountain of the
 World,
 And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the
 Ocean, we,
 We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand
 Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic
 queen —
 Of the Ocean — of the Indies — Ad-
 mirals we —
 Our title, which we never mean to
 yield,
 Our guerdon not alone for what we
 did,
 But our amends for all we might have
 done —
 The vast occasion of our stronger
 life —
 Eighteen long years of waste, seven in
 your Spain,
 Lost, showing courts and kings a truth
 the babe
 Will suck in with his milk hereafter
 — earth
 A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
 We fronted there the learning of all
 Spain,
 All their cosmogonies, their astrono-
 mies:
 Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the
 golden guess
 Is morning-star to the full round of
 truth.
 No guess-work! I was certain of my
 goal;
 Some thought it heresy, but that
 would not hold.
 King David call'd the heavens a hide,
 a tent
 Spread over earth, and so this earth
 was flat:
 Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
 That trees grew downward, rain fell
 upward, men
 Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and
 besides,
 The great Augustine wrote that none
 could breathe
 Within the zone of heat; so might
 there be
 Two Adams, two mankinds, and that
 was clean
 Against God's word: thus was I
 beaten back,
 And chiefly to my sorrow by the
 Church,
 And thought to turn my face from
 Spain, appeal

Once more to France or England;
 but our Queen
 Recall'd me, for at last their High-
 nesses
 Were half-assured this earth might
 be a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
 All glory to the mother of our Lord,
 And Holy Church, from whom I never
 swerved
 Not even by one hair's-breadth of
 heresy,
 I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet — not all — last night a
 dream — I sail'd
 On my first voyage, harass'd by the
 frights
 Of my first crew, their curses and
 their groans.
 The great flame-banner borne by Tene-
 riffe,
 The compass, like an old friend false
 at last
 In our most need, appall'd them, and
 the wind
 Still westward, and the weedy seas —
 at length
 The landbird, and the branch with
 berries on it,
 The carven staff — and last the light,
 the light
 On Guanahani! but I changed the
 name;
 San Salvador I call'd it; and the
 light
 Grew as I gazed, and brought out a
 broad sky
 Of dawning over — not those alien
 palms,
 The marvel of that fair new nature —
 not
 That Indian isle, but our most ancient
 East
 Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
 The glory of the Lord flash up, and
 beat
 Thro' all the homely town from jas-
 per, sapphire,
 Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sar-
 dius,
 Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
 Jacynth, and amethyst — and those
 twelve gates,
 Pearl — and I woke, and thought —
 death — I shall die —
 I am written in the Lamb's own Book
 of Life
 To walk within the glory of the Lord
 Sunless and moonless, utter light —
 but no!
 The Lord had sent this bright, strange
 dream to me
 To mind me of the secret vow I made

When Spain was waging war against
the Moor —
I strove myself with Spain against
the Moor.
There came two voices from the Sep-
ulchre,
Two friars crying that if Spain should
oust
The Moslem from her limit, he, the
fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down
and raze
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon
I vow'd
That, if our Princes harken'd to my
prayer,
Whatever wealth I brought from that
new world
Should, in this old, be consecrate to
lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from
thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes
gold enough
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a
Moor,
And breach'd the belting wall of
Cambalu,
And given the Great Khan's palaces
to the Moor,
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Pres-
ter John,
And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I
brought
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir
all
The gold that Solomon's navies car-
ried home,
Would that have gilded *me*? Blue
blood of Spain,
Tho' quartering your own royal arms
of Spain,
I have not: blue blood and black blood
of Spain,
The noble and the convict of Castile,
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you
know
The flies at home, that ever swarm
about
And cloud the highest heads, and
murmur down
Truth in the distance — these out-
buzz'd me so
That even our prudent king, our right-
eous queen —
I pray'd them being so calumniated
They would commission one of weight
and worth
To judge between my slander'd self
and me —
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
They send me out *his* tool, Bovadilla,
one

As ignorant and impolitic as a beast —
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed
— who sack'd
My dwelling, seized upon my papers,
loosed
My captives, feed the rebels of the
crown,
Sold the crown-farms for all but noth-
ing, gave
All but free leave for all to work the
mines,
Drove me and my good brothers home
in chains,
And gathering ruthless gold — a sin-
gle piece
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castil-
lanos — so
They tell me — weigh'd him down
into the abysm —
The hurricane of the latitude on him
fell,
The seas of our discovering over-roll
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to
the shore.
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O
my lord,
I swear to you I heard his voice be-
tween
The thunders in the black Veragua
nights,
"O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
Have I not been about thee from thy
birth?
Given thee the keys of the great
Ocean-sea?
Set thee in light till time shall be no
more?
Is it I who have deceived thee or the
world?
Endure! thou hast done so well for
men, that men
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?"

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when
drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his
voice,
"Be not cast down. I lead thee by
the hand,
Fear not." And I shall hear his
voice again —
I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will —
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and
king —

The first discoverer starves — his fol-
lowers, all
Flower into fortune — our world's way
— and I,
Without a roof that I can call mine
own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal
withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel
scum
I open'd to the West, thro' which the
lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your
Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked
isles —
Their kindly native princes slain or
slaved,
Their wives and children Spanish con-
cubines,
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd
in blood,
Some dead of hunger, some beneath
the scourge,
Some over-labor'd, some by their own
hands, —
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,
kill
Their babies at the breast for hate of
Spain —
Ah God, the harmless people whom
we found
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise !
Who took us for the very Gods from
Heaven,
And we have sent them very fiends
from Hell ;
And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led
the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic
Queen
Smiles on me, saying, "Be thou com-
forted !
This creedless people will be brought
to Christ
And own the holy governance of
Rome."

But who could dream that we, who
bore the Cross
Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalized
the Cross,
By him, the Catalanian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies ? who be-
lieve
These hard memorials of our truth to
Spain
Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court ?
and yet
Pardon — too harsh, unjust. I am
rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by
my bed,
And I will have them buried in my
grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are
God's
Own voice to justify the dead — per-
chance
Spain once the most chivalric race on
earth,
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest
realm on earth,
So made by me, may seek to unbury
me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old
Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to
Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave
will say,
"Behold the bones of Christopher
Colón" —
"Ay, but the chains, what do *they*
mean — the chains ?" —
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain
Who then will have to answer, "These
same chains
Bound these same bones back thro'
the Atlantic sea,
Which he unchain'd for all the world
to come."

O Queen of Heaven who seest the
souls in Hell
And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do — for the moment. Stay,
my son
Is here anon: my son will speak for
me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that
grind
Bone against bone. You will not.
One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray
you tell
King Ferdinand who plays with me,
that one,
Whose life has been no play with him
and his
Hidalgos — shipwrecks, famines, fe-
vers, fights,
Mutinies, treacheries — wink'd at, and
condoned —
That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready — tho' our Holy Catholic
Queen,
Who fain had pledged her jewels on
my first voyage,
Whose hope was mine to spread the
Catholic faith,
Who wept with me when I return'd
in chains,
Who sits beside the blessed Virgin
now,

To whom I send my prayer by night
and day —
She is gone — but you will tell the
King, that I,
Rack'd as I am with gout, and
wrench'd with pains
Gain'd in the service of His Highness,
yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last
voyage,
And readier, if the King would hear,
to lead
One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from
thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you
have dared
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my
poor thanks!
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND.
A.D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race — he had
stricken my father dead —
But I gather'd my fellows together, I
swore I would strike off his
head.
Each one of them look'd like a king,
and was noble in birth as in
worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang
from the oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the
bravest hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than
have done one another a wrong.
He lived on an isle in the ocean — we
sail'd on a Friday morn —
He that had slain my father the day
before I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean,
and there on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and
away thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that
we never had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on
a silent shore,
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light
without sound, and the long
waterfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the
base of the mountain walls,

And the poplar and cypress unshaken
by storm flourish'd up beyond
sight,
And the pine shot aloft from the crag
to an unbelievable height,
And high in the heaven above it there
flicker'd a songless lark,
And the cock couldn't crow, and the
bull couldn't low, and the dog
couldn't bark.
And round it we went, and thro' it, but
never a murmur, a breath —
It was all of it fair as life, it was all
of it quiet as death,
And we hated the beautiful Isle, for
whenever we strove to speak
Our voices were thinner and fainter
than any flittermouse-shriek;
And the men that were mighty, of
tongue and could raise such
a battle-cry
That a hundred who heard it would
rush on a thousand lances and
die —
O they to be dumb'd by the charm!
— so fluster'd with anger were
they
They almost fell on each other; but
after we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting,
we landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with
human voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and when-
ever their voices peal'd
The steer fell down at the plow and
the harvest died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys
and half of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth,
and the dwelling broke into
flame;
And the shouting of these wild birds
ran into the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shout-
ing and seized one another and
slew;
But I drew them the one from the
other; I saw that we could not
stay,
And we left the dead to the birds and
we sail'd with our wounded
away.

V.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers:
their breath met us out on the
seas,
For the Spring and the middle Sum-
mer sat each on the lap of the
breeze;
And the red passion-flower to the
cliffs, and the dark-blue ele-
matis, clung,

And starr'd with a myriad blossom
 the long convolvulus hung;
 And the topmost spire of the moun-
 tain was lilies in lieu of snow,
 And the lilies like glaciers winded
 down, running out below
 Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy,
 the blaze of gorse! and the
 blush
 Of millions of roses that sprang with-
 out leaf or a thorn from the
 bush;
 And the whole isle-side flashing down
 from the peak without ever a
 tree
 Swept like a torrent of gems from the
 sky to the blue of the sea;
 And we roll'd upon capes of crocus
 and vaunted our kith and our
 kin,
 And we wallow'd in beds of lilies,
 and chanted the triumph of
 Finn,
 Till each like a golden image was
 pollen'd from head to feet
 And each was as dry as a cricket,
 with thirst in the middle-day
 heat.
 Blossom and blossom, and promise of
 blossom, but never a fruit!
 And we hated the Flowering Isle, as
 we hated the isle that was mute,
 And we tore up the flowers by the
 million and flung them in bight
 and bay,
 And we left but a naked rock, and in
 anger we sail'd away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits:
 all round from the cliffs and
 the capes,
 Purple or amber, dangled a hundred
 fathom of grapes,
 And the warm melon lay like a little
 sun on the tawny sand,
 And the fig ran up from the beach
 and rioted over the land,
 And the mountain arose like a jew-
 ell'd throne thro' the fragrant
 air,
 Glowing with all-color'd plums and
 with golden masses of pear,
 And the crimson and scarlet of berries
 that flamed upon bine and vine,
 But in every berry and fruit was the
 poisonous pleasure of wine;
 And the peak of the mountain was
 apples, the hugest that ever
 were seen,
 And they prest, as they grew, on each
 other, with hardly a leaflet be-
 tween,
 And all of them redder than rosiest
 health or than utterest shame,

And setting, when Even descended,
 the very sunset aflame;
 And we stay'd three days, and we
 gorged and we madden'd, till
 every one drew
 His sword on his fellow to slay him,
 and ever they struck and they
 slew;
 And myself, I had eaten but sparingly,
 and fought till I sunder'd the
 fray,
 Then I bade them remember my
 father's death, and we sail'd
 away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we
 were lured by the light from
 afar,
 For the peak sent up one league of
 fire to the Northern Star;
 Lured by the glare and the blare, but
 scarcely could stand upright,
 For the whole isle shudder'd and
 shook like a man in a mortal
 affright;
 We were giddy besides with the fruits
 we had gorged, and so crazed
 that at last
 There were some leap'd into the fire;
 and away we sail'd, and we
 past
 Over that undersea isle, where the
 water is clearer than air:
 Down we look'd: what a garden! O
 bliss, what a Paradise there!
 Towers of a happier time, low down
 in a rainbow deep
 Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal
 sleep!
 And three of the gentlest and best of
 my people, whate'er I could
 say,
 Plunged head down in the sea, and
 the Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle,
 where the heavens lean low on
 the land,
 And ever at dawn from the cloud
 glitter'd o'er us a sunbright
 hand,
 Then it open'd and dropt at the side
 of each man, as he rose from
 his rest,
 Bread enough for his need till the
 laborless day dipt under the
 West;
 And we wander'd about it and thro'
 it. O never was time so
 good!
 And we sang of the triumphs of
 Finn, and the boast of our
 ancient blood,

And we gazed at the wandering wave
 as we sat by the gurgle of
 springs,
 And we chanted the songs of the
 Bards and the glories of fairy
 kings;
 But at length we began to be weary,
 to sigh, and to stretch and
 yawn,
 Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and
 the sunbright hand of the
 dawn,
 For there was not an enemy near, but
 the whole green Isle was our
 own,
 And we took to playing at ball, and
 we took to throwing the stone,
 And we took to playing at battle, but
 that was a perilous play,
 For the passion of the battle was in
 us, we slew and we sail'd
 away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches
 and heard their musical cry —
 "Come to us, O come, come" in the
 stormy red of a sky
 Dashing the fires and the shadows of
 dawn on the beautiful shapes,
 For a wild witch naked as heaven
 stood on each of the loftiest
 capes,
 And a hundred ranged on the rock
 like white sea-birds in a row,
 And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced
 on the wrecks in the sand be-
 low,
 And a hundred splash'd from the
 ledges, and bosom'd the burst
 of the spray,
 But I knew we should fall on each
 other, and hastily sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the
 Isle of the Double Towers,
 One was of smooth-cut stone, one
 carved all over with flowers,
 But an earthquake always moved in
 the hollows under the dells,
 And they shock'd on each other and
 butt'd each other with clashing
 of bells,
 And the daws flew out of the Towers
 and jangled and wrangled in
 vain,
 And the clash and boom of the bells
 rang into the heart and the brain,
 Till the passion of battle was on us,
 and all took sides with the
 Towers,
 There were some for the clean-cut
 stone, there were more for the
 carven flowers,

And the wrathful thunder of God
 peal'd over us all the day,
 For the one half slew the other, and
 after we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint
 who had sail'd with St. Brendan
 of yore,
 He had lived ever since on the Isle
 and his winters were fiftenscore,
 And his voice was low as from other
 worlds, and his eyes were
 sweet,
 And his white hair sank to his heels
 and his white beard fell to his
 feet,
 And he spake to me, "O Maeldune,
 let be this purpose of thine!
 Remember the words of the Lord
 when he told us 'Vengeance is
 mine!'
 His fathers have slain thy fathers
 in war or in single strife,
 Thy fathers have slain his fathers,
 each taken a life for a life,
 Thy father had slain his father, how
 long shall the murder last?
 Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer
 the Past to be Past."
 And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard
 and we pray'd as we heard him
 pray,
 And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and
 sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown
 from, and there on the shore
 was he,
 The man that had slain my father. I
 saw him and let him be.
 O weary was I of the travel, the
 trouble, the strife and the sin,
 When I landed again, with a tithe of
 my men, on the Isle of Finn.

DE PROFUNDIS:

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 Where all that was to be, in all that
 was,
 Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the
 vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy-
 ing light —
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,

Thro' all this changing world of
 changeless law,
 And every phase of ever-heightening
 life,
 And nine long months of antenatal
 gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent —
 her dark orb
 Touch'd with earth's light — thou
 comest, darling boy;
 Our own; a babe in lineament and
 limb
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect
 man;
 Whose face and form are hers and
 mine in one,
 Indissolubly married like our love;
 Live, and be happy in thyself, and
 serve
 This mortal race thy kin so well, that
 men
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O
 young life
 Breaking with laughter from the dark;
 and may
 The fated channel where thy motion
 lives
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy
 course
 Along the years of haste and random
 youth
 Unshatter'd; then full-current thro'
 full man;
 And last in kindly curves, with gen-
 tlest fall,
 By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
 To that last deep where we and thou
 are still.

II.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 From that great deep, before our
 world begins,
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as
 he will —
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,
 From that true world within the world
 we see,
 Whereof our world is but the bound-
 ing shore —
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
 With this ninth moon, that sends the
 hidden sun
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest,
 darling boy.

II.

For in the world, which is not ours,
 They said
 "Let us make man" and that which
 should be man,
 From that one light no man can look
 upon,

Drew to this shore lit by the suns and
 moons
 And all the shadows. O dear Spirit
 half-lost
 In thine own shadow and this fleshly
 sign
 That thou art thou — who wailest
 being born
 And banish'd into mystery, and the
 pain
 Of this divisible-indivisible world
 Among the numerable-innumerable
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite
 space
 In finite-infinite Time — our mortal
 veil
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite
 One,
 Who made thee unconceivably Thy-
 self
 Out of His whole World-self and all
 in all —
 Live thou! and of the grain and husk,
 the grape
 And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
 From death to death thro' life and
 life, and find
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who
 wrought
 Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
 But this main-miracle, that thou art
 thou,
 With power on thine own act and on
 the world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name — Halle-
 luiah! —
 Infinite Ideality!
 Immeasurable Reality!
 Infinite Personality!
 Hallowed be Thy name — Halleluiah!

II.

We feel we are nothing — for all is
 Thou and in Thee;
 We feel we are something — *that* also
 has come from Thee;
 We know we are nothing — but Thou
 wilt help us to be.
 Hallowed be Thy name — Halleluiah!

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE "NINETEENTH CENTURY."

Those that of late had fled far and
 fast
 To touch all shores, now leaving to
 the skill
 Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
 Have charter'd this; where, mindful
 of the past,

Our true co-mates regather round the
mast;
Of diverse tongue, but with a com-
mon will
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave
the blast;
For some, descending from the sacred
peak
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have
leagued again
Their lot with ours to rove the world
about;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn
to seek
If any golden harbor be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of
Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOK-
FIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that
knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to
mouth my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's
chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and
guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your
jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk
of lines,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-
golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are
gone to rest.
You man of humorous-melancholy
mark,
Dead of some inward agony — is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past
away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Ζκιάς ὕψος — dream of a shadow, go —
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle
sails,

They kept their faith, their freedom,
on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day
and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad no-
where scales
Their headlong passes, but his foot-
step fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels
from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in
prone flight
By thousands down the crags and
thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough
rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back
the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred
years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine
own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake
the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier
mountaineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes
and fears,
French of the French, and Lord of
human tears;
Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit
laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that
would advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be
thy peers;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of
years
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of
France!
Who dost not love our England — so
they say;
I know not — England, France, all
man to be
Will make one people ere man's race
be run:
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full
courtesy
To younger England in the boy my
son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

¹ATHELSTAN King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,
Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,
Hew'd the linden-wood,²
Hack'd the battleshield,
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their Grandsires —
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Struck for their hoards and their
hearthst and their homes.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the shipcrews
Doom'd to the death.
All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow'd, from when first the great
Sun-star of morningtide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious
creature
Sank to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
Marr'd by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies

¹ I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

² Shields of lindenwood.

Troubled the track of the host that
we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp
from the grindstone,
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before
us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island :
Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the
sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of
Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless
numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his warship :
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king
in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero !

X.

Slender warrant had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives —
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war !

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive —
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties —
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better

In perils of battle
On places of slaughter —
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,
The crash of the charges,¹
The wielding of weapons —
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redde'n'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-
sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dy-
flen² again,
Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-
Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-
skin —
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear
it, and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to
rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to
gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge —
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories —
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE
TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and
round

¹ Lit. "the gathering of men." ² Dublin.

The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas
flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his
head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a
golden cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining
flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to
heaven
Far off from out an island girt by
foes,
All day the men contend in grievous
war
From their own city, but with set of
sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the
glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the
neighbors round
May see, and sail to help them in the
war;
So from his head the splendor went
to heaven.
From wall to dyke he stept, he stood,
nor join'd
The Achæans — honoring his wise
mother's word —
There standing, shouted, and Pallas
far away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook
the foe.
For like the clear voice when a trum-
pet shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a
town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
Was heard among the Trojans, all
their hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned
horses whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs
at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the chari-
oteers
To see the dread, unweariable fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's
head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess
made it burn.
Thrice from the dyke he sent his
mighty shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans
and allies;
And there and then twelve of their
noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA
ON HER MARRIAGE.

O you that were eyes and light to the
King till he past away

From the darkness of life —
 He saw not his daughter—he blest
 her: the blind King sees you
 to-day,
 He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER
 ABBEY.

Nor here! the white North has thy
 bones; and thou,
 Heroic sailor-soul,
 Art passing on thine happier voyage
 now
 Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE
 FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred
 years, and grown
 In power, and ever growest, since
 thine own
 Fair Florence honoring thy nativity,
 Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
 Hath sought the tribute of a verse
 from me,
 I, wearing but the garland of a
 day,
 Cast at thy feet one flower that fades
 away.

THE CUP;

A TRAGEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GALATIANS.

SYNORIX, an *ex-Tetrarch*.
SINNATUS, a *Tetrarch*.
Attendant.
Boy.

Maid.
PHŒBE.
CAMMA, wife of *Sinnatus*, afterwards
Priestess in the Temple of *Artemis*.

ROMANS.

ANTONIUS, a *Roman General*.
PUBLIUS.

Nobleman.
Messenger.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—DISTANT VIEW OF A CITY OF GALATIA. AFTERNOON.

As the curtain rises, Priestesses are heard singing in the Temple. Boy discovered on a pathway among Rocks picking grapes. A party of Roman Soldiers, guarding a prisoner in chains, come down the pathway and exeunt.

Enter SYNORIX (looking round). *Singing ceases.*

Synorix. Pine, beech and plane,
oak, walnut, apricot,

Vine, cypress, poplar, myrtle, bowering in

The city where she dwells. She past me here

Three years ago when I was flying from

My Tetrarchy to Rome. I almost touch'd her—

A maiden slowly moving on to music
Among her maidens to this Temple—
O Gods!

She is my fate—else wherefore has my fate

Brought me again to her own city?—
married

Since—married *Sinnatus*, the Tetrarch here—

But if he be conspirator, Rome will chain,

Or slay him. I may trust to gain her, then

When I shall have my tetrarchy restored

By Rome, our mistress, grateful that I show'd her

The weakness and the dissonance of
our clans,

And how to crush them easily.
Wretched race!

And once I wish'd to scourge them to
the bones.

But in this narrow breathing-time of
life

Is vengeance for its own sake worth
the while,

If once our ends are gain'd? and now
this cup—

I never felt such passion for a woman.
[Brings out a cup and scroll from
under his cloak.

What have I written to her?

[Reading the scroll.

“To the admired *Camma*, wife of
Sinnatus, the Tetrarch, one who years
ago, himself an adorer of our great
goddess, *Artemis*, beheld you afar off
worshipping in her Temple, and loved
you for it, sends you this cup rescued
from the burning of one of her shrines
in a city thro' which he past with the
Roman army: it is the cup we use in
our marriages. Receive it from one
who cannot at present write himself
other than

“A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE
IN THE ROMAN LEGION.”

[Turns and looks up to boy.

Boy, dost thou know the house of *Sinnatus*?

Boy. These grapes are for the house
of *Sinnatus*—

Close to the Temple.

Synorix. Yonder?

Boy. Yes.

Synorix (Aside).

That I

With all my range of women should
yet shun

To meet her face to face at once!

My boy,

[*Boy comes down rocks to him.*]

Take thou this letter and this cup to
Camma,

The wife of Sinnatus.

Boy. Going or gone to-day
To hunt with Sinnatus.

Synorix. That matters not.
Take thou this cup and leave it at her
doors.

[*Gives the cup and scroll to the boy.*]

Boy. I will, my lord.

[*Takes his basket of grapes and exit.*]

Enter ANTONIUS.

*Antonius (meeting the Boy as he goes
out).* Why, whither runs
the boy?

Isthatthecupyourescuedfromthefire?

Synorix. I send it to the wife of
Sinnatus,

One half besotted in religious rites.

You come here with your soldiers to
enforce

The long-withholden tribute: you
suspect

This Sinnatus of playing patriotism,
Which in your sense is treason. You
have yet

No proof against him: now this pious
cup

Is passport to their house, and open
arms

To him who gave it; and once there
I warrant

I worm thro' all their windings.

Antonius. If you prosper,
Our Senate, wearied of their tetrarchies,
Their quarrels with themselves, their
spites at Rome,

Is like enough to cancel them, and
throne

One king above them all, who shall
be true

To the Roman: and from what I heard
in Rome,

This tributary crown may fall to you.

Synorix. The king, the crown! their
talk in Rome? is it so?

[*Antonius nods.*]

Well — I shall serve Galatia taking it,
And save her from herself, and be to
Rome

More faithful than a Roman.

[*Turns and sees Camma coming.*]

Stand aside,

Stand aside; here she comes!

[*Watching Camma as she enters
with her Maid.*]

Camma (to Maid.) Where is he, girl?

Maid. You know the waterfall
That in the summer keeps the moun-
tain side,

But after rain o'erleaps a jutting
rock

And shoots three hundred feet.

Camma. The stag is there?

Maid. Seen in the thicket at the
bottom there

But yester-even.

Camma. Good then, we will climb
The mountain opposite and watch the
chase.

[*They descend the rocks and exeunt.*]

Synorix (watching her. Aside.) The
bust of Juno and the brows and
eyes

Of Venus; face and form unmatchable!

Antonius. Why do you look at her
so lingeringly?

Synorix. To see if years have
changed her.

Antonius (sarcastically). Love her,
do you?

Synorix. I envied Sinnatus when
he married her.

Antonius. She knows it? Ha!

Synorix. She — no, nor ev'n my
face.

Antonius. Nor Sinnatus either?

Synorix. No, nor Sinnatus.

Antonius. Hot-blooded! I have
heard them say in Rome,

That your own people cast you from
their bounds,

From some unprincipally violence to a
woman,

As Rome did Tarquin.

Synorix. Well, if this were so,
I here return like Tarquin — for a
crown.

Antonius. And may be foil'd like
Tarquin, if you follow

Not the dry light of Rome's straight-
going policy,

But the fool-fire of love or lust, which
well

May make you lose yourself, may
even drown you

In the good regard of Rome.

Synorix. Tut — fear me not;
I ever had my victories among women.
I am most true to Rome.

Antonius (aside). I hate the man!
What filthy tools our Senate works
with! Still

I must obey them. (*Aloud.*) Fare you
well. [*Going.*]

Synorix. Farewell!

Antonius (stopping). A moment! If
you track this Sinnatus

In any treason, I give you here an
order [*Produces a paper.*]

To seize upon him. Let me sign it.
(*Signs it.*) There

"Antonius leader of the Roman
Legion."

[*Hands the paper to Synorix. Goes
up pathway and exit.*]

Synorix. Woman again! — but I am wiser now.
No rushing on the game — the net, — the net.

[*Shouts of "Sinnatus! Sinnatus!" Then horn.*]

(*Looking off stage.*) He comes, a rough, bluff, simple-looking fellow.

If we may judge the kernel by the husk,
Not one to keep a woman's fealty when
Assailed by Craft and Love. I'll join with him:

I may reap something from him — come upon *her*

Again, perhaps, to-day — *her*. Who are with him?

I see no face that knows me. Shall I risk it?

I am a Roman now, they dare not touch me.

I will.

Enter SINNATUS, Huntsmen and hounds.

Fair Sir, a happy day to you!
You reckon but little of the Roman here,
While you can take your pastime in the woods.

Sinnatus. Ay, ay, why not? What would you with me, man?

Synorix. I am a life-long lover of the chase,
And tho' a stranger fain would be allow'd

To join the hunt.

Sinnatus. Your name?

Synorix. Strato, my name.

Sinnatus. No Roman name?

Synorix. A Greek, my lord; you know

That we Galatians are both Greek and Gaul.

[*Shouts and horns in the distance.*]

Sinnatus. Hillo, the stag! (*To Synorix.*) What, you are all unfurnish'd?

Give him a bow and arrows — follow — follow.

[*Exit, followed by Huntsmen.*]

Synorix. Slowly but surely — till I see my way.

It is the one step in the dark beyond
Our expectation, that amazes us.

[*Distant shouts and horns.*]

Hillo! Hillo!

[*Exit Synorix. Shouts and horns.*]

SCENE II. — A ROOM IN THE TETRARCH'S HOUSE.

Frescoed figures on the wall. Evening. Moonlight outside. A couch with cushions on it. A small table with flagon of wine, cups, plate of grapes, etc., also the cup of Scene I. A chair with drapery on it.

CAMMA enters and opens curtains of window.

Camma. No Sinnatus yet — and there the rising moon.

[*Takes up a cithern and sits on couch. Plays and sings.*]

"Moon on the field and the foam,
Moon on the waste and the wold,
Moon bring him home, bring him home

Safe from the dark and the cold,
Home, sweet home, bring him home,

Home with the flock to the fold —
Safe from the wolf" —

(*Listening.*) Is he coming? I thought I heard

A footstep. No not yet. They say that Rome

Sprang from a wolf. I fear my dear lord mixt

With some conspiracy against the wolf.

This mountain shepherd never dream'd of Rome.

(*Sings.*) "Safe from the wolf to the fold" —

And that great break of precipice that runs

Thro' all the wood, where twenty years ago

Huntsman, and hound, and deer were all neck-broken!

Nay, here he comes.

Enter SINNATUS followed by SYNORIX.

Sinnatus (angrily). I tell thee, my good fellow,

My arrow struck the stag.

Synorix. But was it so?

Nay, you were further off: besides the wind

Went with my arrow.

Sinnatus. I am sure I struck him.

Synorix. And I am just as sure, my lord, I struck him.

(*Aside.*) And I may strike your game when you are gone.

Camma. Come, come, we will not quarrel about the stag.

I have had a weary day in watching you.

Yours must have been a wearier. Sit and eat,

And take a hunter's vengeance on the meats.

Sinnatus. No, no — we have eaten — we are heated: Wine!

Camma. Who is our guest?

Sinnatus. Strato he calls himself.

[*Camma offers wine to Synorix, while Sinnatus helps himself.*]

Sinnatus. I pledge you, Strato.

[*Drinks.*]

Synorix. And I you, my lord.

[*Drinks.*

Sinnatus (seeing the cup sent to Camma). What's here?

Camma. A strange gift sent to me to-day.

A sacred cup saved from a blazing shrine

Of our great Goddess, in some city where

Antonius past. I had believed that Rome

Made war upon the peoples not the Gods.

Synorix. Most like the city rose against Antonius,

Whereon he fired it, and the sacred shrine

By chance was burnt along with it.

Sinnatus. Had you then No message with the cup?

Camma. Why, yes, see here.

[*Gives him the scroll.*

Sinnatus (reads). "To the admired Camma,—beheld you afar off—loved you—sends you this cup—the cup we use in our marriages—cannot at present write himself other than

"A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE
IN THE ROMAN LEGION."

Serving by force! Were there no boughs to hang on,

Rivers to drown in? Serve by force? No force

Could make me serve by force.

Synorix. How then, my lord? The Roman is encampt without your city—

The force of Rome a thousand-fold our own.

Must all Galatia hang or drown herself?

And you a Prince and Tetrarch in this province—

Sinnatus. Province!

Synorix. Well, well, they call it so in Rome.

Sinnatus (angrily). Province!

Synorix. A noble anger! but Antonius

To-morrow will demand your tribute— you,

Can you make war? Have you alliances?

Bithynia, Pontus, Paphlagonia?

We have had our leagues of old with Eastern kings.

There is my hand—if such a league there be.

What will you do?

Sinnatus. Not set myself abroad And run my mind out to a random guest

Who join'd me in the hunt. You saw my hounds

True to the scent; and we have two-legged dogs

Among us who can smell a true occasion,

And when to bark and how.

Synorix. My good Lord Sinnatus, I once was at the hunting of a lion.

Roused by the clamor of the chase he woke,

Came to the front of the wood—his monarch mane

Bristled about his quick ears—he stood there

Staring upon the hunter. A score of dogs

Gnaw'd at his ankles: at the last he felt

The trouble of his feet, put forth one paw,

Slew four, and knew it not, and so remain'd

Staring upon the hunter: and this Rome

Will crush you if you wrestle with her; then

Save for some slight report in her own Senate

Scarce know what she has done.

(*Aside.*) Would I could move him, Provoke him any way! (*Aloud.*) The

Lady Camma,

Wise I am sure as she is beautiful, Will close with me that to submit at

once

Is better than a wholly-hopeless war, Our gallant citizens murder'd all in

vain,

Son, husband, brother gash'd to death in vain,

And the small state more cruelly trampled on

Than had she never moved.

Camma.

Sir, I had once

A boy who died a babe; but were he living

And grown to man and Sinnatus will'd it, I

Would set him in the front rank of the fight

With scarce a pang. (*Rises.*) Sir, if a state submit

At once, she may be blotted out at once And swallow'd in the conqueror's

chronicle.

Whereas in wars of freedom and defence

The glory and grief of battle won or lost

Solders a race together—yea—tho' they fail,

The names of those who fought and fell are like

A bank'd-up fire that flashes out again

From century to century, and at last
May lead them on to victory — I hope
so —

Like phantoms of the Gods.

Sinnatus. Well spoken, wife.

Synorix (bowing). Madam, so well I
yield.

Sinnatus. I should not wonder
If Synorix, who has dwelt three years
in Rome

And wrought his worst against his
native land,

Returns with this Antonius.

Synorix. What is Synorix ?

Sinnatus. Galatian, and not know ?

This Synorix.

Was Tetrarch here, and tyrant also —
did

Dishonor to our wives.

Synorix. Perhaps you judge him
With feeble charity : being as you tell
me

Tetrarch, there might be willing wives
enough

To feel dishonor, honor.

Camma. Do not say so.
I know of no such wives in all Ga-
latia.

There may be courtesans for aught I
know

Whose life is one dishonor.

Enter ATTENDANT.

Attendant (aside). My lord, the men !

Sinnatus (aside). Our anti-Roman
faction ?

Attendant (aside). Ay, my lord.

Synorix (overhearing). (*Aside.*) I
have enough — their anti-Ro-
man faction.

Sinnatus (aloud). Some friends of
mine would speak with me
without.

You, Strato, make good cheer till I
return. [*Exit.*]

Synorix. I have much to say, no
time to say it in.

First, lady, know myself am that
Galatian

Who sent the cup.

Camma. I thank you from my heart.

Synorix. Then that I serve with
Rome to serve Galatia.

That is my secret : keep it, or you sell me
To torment and to death. [*Coming closer.*]

For your ear only —

I love you — for your love to the
great Goddess.

The Romans sent me here a spy upon
you,

To draw you and your husband to your
doom.

I'd sooner die than do it.

[*Takes out paper given him by An-
tonius.*]

This paper sign'd
Antonius — will you take it, read it ?
there !

Camma (reads). "You are to seize
on Sinnatus, — if —"

Synorix (snatches paper). No more.
What follows is for no wife's eyes. O

Camma,
Rome has a glimpse of this con-
spiracy ;

Rome never yet hath spar'd con-
spirator.

Horrible ! flaying, scourging, crucify-
ing —

Camma. I am tender enough. Why
do you practise on me ?

Synorix. Why should I practise on
you ? How you wrong me !

I am sure of being every way malign'd.
And if you should betray me to your
husband —

Camma. Will you betray him by
this order ?

Synorix. See,
I tear it all to pieces, never dream'd
Of acting on it. [*Tears the paper.*]

Camma. I owe you thanks for
ever.

Synorix. Hath Sinnatus never told
you of this plot ?

Camma. What plot ?

Synorix. A child's sand-castle on
the beach

For the next wave — all seen, — all
calculated,

All known by Rome. No chance for
Sinnatus.

Camma. Why, said you not as much
to my brave Sinnatus ?

Synorix. Brave — ay — too brave,
too over-confident,
Too like to ruin himself, and you, and
me !

Who else, with this black thunderbolt
of Rome

Above him, would have chased the
stag to-day

In the full face of all the Roman
camp ?

A miracle that they let him home
again,

Not caught, maim'd, blinded him.

[*Camma shudders.*]

(*Aside.*) I have made her tremble.
(*Aloud.*) I know they mean to torture
him to death.

I dare not tell him how I came to
know it ;

I durst not trust him with — my serv-
ing Rome

To serve Galatia : you heard him on
the letter.

Not say as much ? I all but said as
much.

I am sure I told him that his plot was
folly.

I say it to you — you are wiser — Rome knows all,
But you know not the savagery of Rome.

Camma. O — have you power with Rome? use it for him!

Synorix. Alas! I have no such power with Rome. All that

Lies with Antonius.

[*As if struck by a sudden thought.*
Comes over to her.

He will pass to-morrow
In the gray dawn before the Temple doors.

You have beauty, — O great beauty,
— and Antonius,

So gracious toward women, never yet
Flung back a woman's prayer. Plead to him,

I am sure you will prevail.

Camma. Still — I should tell My husband.

Synorix. Will he let you plead for him

To a Roman?

Camma. I fear not.

Synorix. Then do not tell him.
Or tell him, if you will, when you return,

When you have charm'd our general into mercy,

And all is safe again. O dearest lady,
[*Murmurs of "Synorix! Synorix!"*
heard outside.

Think,—torture,—death,—and come.
Camma. I will, I will.

And I will not betray you.

Synorix (aside. As Sinnatus enters.).
Stand apart.

Enter SINNATUS and ATTENDANT.

Sinnatus. Thou art that Synorix!
One whom thou hast wrong'd

Without there, knew thee with Antonius.

They howl for thee, to rend thee head from limb.

Synorix. I am much malign'd. I thought to serve Galatia.

Sinnatus. Serve thyself first, villain!
They shall not harm

My guest within my house. There!
[*points to door*] there! this door

Opens upon the forest! Out, begone!
Henceforth I am thy mortal enemy.

Synorix. However I thank thee
[*draws his sword*]; thou hast saved my life. [*Exit.*

Sinnatus (to Attendant). Return and tell them Synorix is not here.

[*Exit Attendant.*
What did that villain Synorix say to you?

Camma. Is he — that — Synorix?

Sinnatus. Wherefore should you doubt it?

One of the men there knew him.

Camma. Only one,
And he perhaps mistaken in the face.

Sinnatus. Come, come, could he deny it? What did he say?

Camma. What should he say?

Sinnatus. What should he say, my wife!

He should say this, that being Tetrarch once

His own true people cast him from their doors

Like a base coin.

Camma. Not kindly to them?

Sinnatus. Kindly?
O the most kindly Prince in all the world!

Would clap his honest citizens on the back,

Bandy their own rude jests with them, be curious

About the welfare of their babes, their wives,

O ay — their wives — their wives. What should he say?

He should say nothing to my wife if I Were by to throttle him! He steep'd himself

In all the lust of Rome. How should you guess

What manner of beast it is?

Camma. Yet he seem'd kindly,
And said he loathed the cruelties that Rome

Wrought on her vassals.

Sinnatus. Did he, honest man?

Camma. And you, that seldom brook the stranger here,

Have let him hunt the stag with you to-day.

Sinnatus. I warrant you now, he said he struck the stag.

Camma. Why no, he never touch'd upon the stag.

Sinnatus. Why so I said, my arrow. Well, to sleep.

[*Goes to close door.*
Camma. Nay, close not yet the door upon a night

That looks half day.

Sinnatus. True; and my friends may spy him

And slay him as he runs.

Camma. He is gone already.
Oh look, — yon grove upon the mountain, — white

In the sweet moon as with a lovelier snow!

But what a blotch of blackness underneath!

Sinnatus, you remember — yea, you must,

That there three years ago — the vast vine-bowers

Ran to the summit of the trees, and dropt

Their streamers earthward, which a
 breeze of May
 Took ever and anon, and open'd out
 The purple zone of hill and heaven;
 there
 You told your love; and like the sway-
 ing vines —
 Yea, — with our eyes, — our hearts,
 our prophet hopes
 Let in the happy distance, and that all
 But cloudless heaven which we have
 found together
 In our three married years! You
 kiss'd me there
 For the first time. Sinnatus, kiss me
 now.
Sinnatus. First kiss. (*Kisses her.*)
 There then. You talk almost
 as if it
 Might be the last.
Camma. Will you not eat a little?
Sinnatus. No, no, we found a goat-
 herd's hut and shared
 His fruits and milk. Liar! You will
 believe
 Now that he never struck the stag —
 a brave one
 Which you shall see to-morrow.
Camma. I rise to-morrow
 In the gray dawn, and take this holy
 cup
 To lodge it in the shrine of Artemis.
Sinnatus. Good!
Camma. If I be not back in half
 an hour,
 Come after me.
Sinnatus. What! is there
 danger?
Camma. Nay,
 None that I know: 'tis but a step
 from here
 To the Temple.
Sinnatus. All my brain is full of
 sleep.
 Wake me before you go, I'll after
 you —
 After me now! [*Closes door and exit.*
Camma (*drawing curtains*). Your
 shadow. Synorix —
 His face was not malignant, and he said
 That men malign'd him. Shall I go?
 Shall I go?
 Death, torture —
 "He never yet flung back a woman's
 prayer" —
 I go, but I will have my dagger with
 me. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. — SAME AS SCENE I.
 DAWN.

Music and Singing in the Temple.

Enter SYNORIX watchfully, after him
 PUBLIUS and Soldiers.

Synorix. Publius!

Publius. Here!

Synorix. Do you remember what
 I told you?

Publius. When you cry "Rome,
 Rome," to seize
 On whomsoever may be talking with
 you,

Or man, or woman, as traitors unto
 Rome.

Synorix. Right. Back again. How
 many of you are there?

Publius. Some half a score.
 [*Exeunt Soldiers and Publius.*

Synorix. I have my guard
 about me.

I need not fear the crowd that hunted
 me

Across the woods, last night. I hardly
 gain'd

The camp at midnight. Will she
 come to me

Now that she knows me Synorix?
 Not if Sinnatus

Has told her all the truth about me.
 Well,

I cannot help the mould that I was
 cast in.

I fling all that upon my fate, my
 star.

I know that I am genial, I would be
 Happy, and make all others happy so
 They did not thwart me. Nay, she
 will not come.

Yet if she be a true and loving wife
 She may, perchance, to save this
 husband. Ay!

See, see, my white bird stepping
 toward the snare.

Why now I count it all but miracle,
 That this brave heart of mine should
 shake me so,

As helplessly as some unbearded boy's
 When first he meets his maiden in a
 bower.

Enter CAMMA (with cup).

Synorix. The lark first takes the
 sunlight on his wing,
 But you, twin sister of the morning
 star,
 Forelead the sun.

Camma. Where is Antonius?

Synorix. Not here as yet. You are
 too early for him.

[*She crosses towards Temple.*

Synorix. Nay, whither go you now?

Camma. To lodge this cup
 Within the holy shrine of Artemis,
 And so return.

Synorix. To find Antonius here.

[*She goes into the Temple, he looks*
after her.

The loveliest life that ever drew the
 light
 From heaven to brood upon her, and
 enrich

Earth with her shadow! I trust she
will return.

These Romans dare not violate the
Temple.

No, I must lure my game into the
camp.

A woman I could live and die for.
What!

Die for a woman, what new faith is
this?

I am not mad, not sick, not old enough
To doat on one alone. Yes, mad for
her,

Camma the stately, Camma the great-
hearted,

So mad, I fear some strange and evil
chance

Coming upon me, for by the Gods I
seem

Strange to myself.

Re-enter CAMMA.

Camma. Where is Antonius?

Synorix. Where? As I said before,
you are still too early.

Camma. Too early to be here alone
with thee;

For whether men malign thy name, or
no,

It bears an evil savor among women.

Where is Antonius? (*Loud.*)

Synorix. Madam, as you know,
The camp is half a league without the
city;

If you will walk with me we needs
must meet

Antonius coming, or at least shall
find him

There in the camp.

Camma. No, not one step with
thee.

Where is Antonius? (*Louder.*)

Synorix (advancing towards her).

Then for your own sake,

Lady, I say it with all gentleness,

And for the sake of Sinnatus your
husband,

I must compel you.

Camma (drawing her dagger). Stay!

— too near is death.

Synorix (disarming her). Is it not
easy to disarm a woman?

*Enter SINNATUS (seizes him from behind
by the throat).*

Synorix (throttled and scarce audible).
Rome! Rome!

Sinnatus. Adulterous dog!

*Synorix (stabbing him with Camma's
dagger).* What! will you have
it?

[*Camma utters a cry and runs to
Sinnatus.*

Sinnatus (falls backward). I have it
in my heart — to the Temple —
fly —

For my sake — or they seize on thee.
Remember!

Away — farewell! [*Dies.*

*Camma (runs up the steps into the
Temple, looking back).* Fare-
well!

Synorix (seeing her escape). The
women of the Temple drag her
in.

Publius! Publius! No,
Antonius would not suffer me to
break

Into the sanctuary. She hath escaped.

[*Looking down at Sinnatus.*
"Adulterous dog!" that red-faced
rage at me!

Then with one quick short stab —
eternal peace.

So end all passions. Then what use
in passions?

To warm the cold bounds of our dying
life

And, lest we freeze in mortal
apathy,

Employ us, heat us, quicken us, help
us, keep us

From seeing all too near that urn,
those ashes

Which all must be. Well used, they
serve us well.

I heard a saying in Egypt, that am-
bition

Is like the sea wave, which the more
you drink,

The more you thirst — yea — drink
too much, as men

Have done on rafts of wreck — it
drives you mad.

I will be no such wreck, am no such
gamester

As, having won the stake, would dare
the chance

Of double, or losing all. The Roman
Senate,

For I have always play'd into their
hands,

Means me the crown. And Camma
for my bride —

The people love her — if I win her
love,

They too will cleave to me, as one
with her.

There then I rest, Rome's tributary
king.

[*Looking down on Sinnatus.*
Why did I strike him? — having
proof enough

Against the man, I surely should have
left

That stroke to Rome. He saved my
life too. Did he?

It seem'd so. I have play'd the sud-
den fool.

And that sets her against me — for the moment.
 Camma — well, well, I never found the woman
 I could not force or wheedle to my will.
 She will be glad at last to wear my crown.
 And I will make Galatia prosperous too,
 And we will chirp among our vines, and smile
 At bygone things till that (*pointing to Sinnatus*) eternal peace.
 Rome! Rome!

Enter PUBLIUS and Soldiers.

Twice I cried Rome. Why came ye not before?
Publius. Why come we now?
 Whom shall we seize upon?
Synorix (pointing to the body of Sinnatus). The body of that dead traitor Sinnatus.
 Bear him away.
 [*Music and Singing in Temple.*]

ACT II.

SCENE. — INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS.

Small gold gates on platform in front of the veil before the colossal statue of the Goddess, and in the centre of the Temple a tripod altar, on which is a lighted lamp. Lamps (lighted) suspended between each pillar. Tripods, vases, garlands of flowers, etc., about stage. Altar at back close to Goddess, with two cups. Solemn music. Priestesses decorating the Temple.

Enter a PRIESTESS.

Priestess. Phæbe, that man from Synorix, who has been
 So oft to see the Priestess, waits once more
 Before the Temple.
Phæbe. We will let her know.
 [*Signs to one of the Priestesses, who goes out.*]
 Since Camma fled from Synorix to our Temple,
 And for her beauty, stateliness, and power,
 Was chosen Priestess here, have you not mark'd
 Her eyes were ever on the marble floor?
 To-day they are fixt and bright — they look straight out.

Hath she made up her mind to marry him?

Priestess. To marry him who stabb'd her Sinnatus.

You will not easily make me credit that.

Phæbe. Ask her.

Enter CAMMA as Priestess (in front of the curtains).

Priestess. You will not marry Synorix?

Camma. My girl, I am the bride of Death, and only

Marry the dead.

Priestess. Not Synorix then?

Camma. My girl, At times this oracle of great Artemis Has no more power than other oracles To speak directly.

Phæbe. Will you speak to him, The messenger from Synorix who waits Before the Temple?

Camma. Why not? Let him enter.
 [*Comes forward on to step by tripod.*]

Enter a MESSENGER.

Messenger (kneels). Greeting and health from Synorix! More than once

You have refused his hand. When last I saw you,

You all but yielded. He entreats you now

For your last answer. When he struck at Sinnatus —

As I have many a time declared to you —

He knew not at the moment who had fasten'd

About his throat — he begs you to forget it

As scarce his act: — a random stroke: all else

Was love for you: he prays you to believe him.

Camma. I pray him to believe — that I believe him.

Messenger. Why that is well. You mean to marry him?

Camma. I mean to marry him — if that be well.

Messenger. This very day the Romans crown him king

For all his faithful services to Rome. He wills you then this day to marry him,

And so be throned together in the sight

Of all the people, that the world may know

You twain are reconciled, and no more feuds

Disturb our peaceful vassalage to Rome.

Camma. To-day? Too sudden. I will brood upon it.
When do they crown him?

Messenger. Even now.

Camma. And where?

Messenger. Here by your temple.

Camma. Come once more to me
Before the crowning, — I will answer you.

[Exit Messenger.]

Phæbe. Great Artemis! O Camma,
can it be well,
Or good, or wise, that you should
clasp a hand

Red with the sacred blood of Sinnatus?

Camma. Good! mine own dagger
driven by Synorix found

All good in the true heart of Sinnatus,
And quench'd it there forever. Wise!
Life yields to death and wisdom bows
to Fate,

Is wisest, doing so. Did not this man
Speak well? We cannot fight impe-
rial Rome,

But he and I are both Galatian-born,
And tributary sovereigns, he and I,
Might teach this Rome — from knowl-
edge of our people —

Where to lay on her tribute — heavily
here

And lightly there. Might I not live
for that,

And drown all poor self-passion in
the sense

Of public good?

Phæbe. I am sure you will not mar-
ry him.

Camma. Are you so sure? I pray
you wait and see.

[Shouts (from the distance),
"Synorix!" "Synorix!"

Camma. Synorix, Synorix! So they
cried Sinnatus

Not so long since — they sicken me.
The One

Who shifts his policy suffers some-
thing, must

Accuse himself, excuse himself; the
Many

Will feel no shame to give themselves
the lie.

Phæbe. Most like it was the Roman
soldier shouted.

Camma. Their shield-borne patriot
of the morning star
Hang'd at mid-day, their traitor of
the dawn

The clamor'd darling of their after-
noon!

And that same head they would have
play'd at ball with,

And kick'd it featureless — they now
would crown.

[Flourish of trumpets.]

*Enter a Galatian NOBLEMAN with crown
on a cushion.*

Noble (kneels). Greeting and health
from Synorix. He sends you
This diadem of the first Galatian
Queen,

That you may feed your fancy on the
glory of it,

And join your life this day with his,
and wear it

Beside him on his throne. He waits
your answer.

Camma. Tell him there is one
shadow among the shadows,

One ghost of all the ghosts — as yet
so new,

So strange among them — such an
alien there,

So much of husband in it still — that if
The shout of Synorix and Camma sit-
ting

Upon one throne, should reach it, it
would rise.

HE! . . . HE, with that red star be-
tween the ribs,

And my knife there — and blast the
king and me,

And blanch the crowd with horror. I
dare not, sir!

Throne him — and then the marriage
— ay and tell him

That I accept the diadem of Galatia —

[All are amazed.]

Yea, that ye saw me crown myself
withal. [Puts on the crown.]

I wait him his crown'd queen.

Noble.

So will I tell him.

[Exit.]

Music. Two Priestesses go up the steps
before the shrine, draw the curtains on
either side (discovering the Goddess),
then open the gates and remain on
steps, one on either side, and kneel.
A Priestess goes off and returns with
a veil of marriage, then assists PHÆBE
to veil Camma. At the same time
Priestesses enter and stand on either
side of the Temple. CAMMA and all
the Priestesses kneel, raise their
hands to the Goddess, and bow
down.

[Shouts, "Synorix! Synorix!"

All rise.]

Camma. Fling wide the doors, and
let the new-made children

Of our imperial mother see the show.

[Sunlight pours through the doors.]
I have no heart to do it. (To Phæbe.)

Look for me!

[Crouches. Phæbe looks out.]

[Shouts, "Synorix! Synorix!"

Phæbe. He climbs the throne.

Hot blood, ambition, pride

So bloat and redden his face — O
would it were

His third last apoplexy! O bestial!
O how unlike our goodly Sinnatus.

Camma (*on the ground*). You wrong
him surely; far as the face goes
A goodlier-looking man than Sinnatus.

Phæbe (*aside*). How dare she say
it? I could hate her for it
But that she is distracted.

[*A flourish of trumpets.*

Camma. Is he crown'd?

Phæbe. Ay, there they crown him.

[*Crowd without shout, "Synorix!
Synorix!"*

Camma (*rises*).

[*A Priestess brings a box of spices
to Camma who throws them on the
altar flame.*

Rouse the dead altar-flame, fling in
the spices,

Nard, Cinnamon, amomum, benzoin.
Let all the air reel into a mist of odor,
As in the midmost heart of Paradise.
Lay down the Lydian carpets for the
king.

The king should pace on purple to his
bride,

And music there to greet my lord the
king. [*Music.*

(*To Phæbe.*) Dost thou remember
when I wedded Sinnatus?

Ay, thou wast there — whether from
maiden fears

Or reverential love for him I loved,
Or some strange second-sight, the
marriage-cup

Wherefrom we make libation to the
Goddess

So shook within my hand, that the red
wine

Ran down the marble and lookt like
blood, like blood.

Phæbe. I do remember your first-
marriage fears.

Camma. I have no fears at this my
second marriage.

See here — I stretch my hand out —
hold it there.

How steady it is!

Phæbe. Steady enough to stab him!

Camma. O hush! O peace! This
violence ill becomes

The silence of our Temple. Gentleness,
Low words best chime with this solemnity.

*Enter a procession of Priestesses and
Children bearing garlands and golden
goblets, and strewing flowers.*

Enter SYNORIX (*as King, with gold laurel-wreath crown and purple robes*),
followed by ANTONIUS, PUBLIUS, Noblemen, Guards, and the Populace.

Camma. Hail, King!

Synorix. Hail, Queen!

The wheel of Fate has roll'd me to
the top.

I would that happiness were gold,
that I

Might cast my largess of it to the
crowd!

I would that every man made feast
to-day

Beneath the shadow of our pines and
planes!

For all my truer life begins to-day.

The past is like a travell'd land now
sunk

Below the horizon — like a barren
shore

That grew salt weeds, but now all
drown'd in love

And glittering at full tide — the boun-
teous bays

And havens filling with a blissful sea.
Nor speak I now too mightily, being
King

And happy! happiest, Lady, in my
power

To make you happy.

Camma. Yes, sir.

Synorix. Our Antonius,
Our faithful friend of Rome, tho'
Rome may set

A free foot where she will, yet of his
courtesy

Entreats he may be present at our
marriage.

Camma. Let him come — a legion
with him, if he will.

(*To Antonius.*) Welcome, my lord
Antonius, to our Temple.

(*To Synorix.*) You on this side the
altar. (*To Antonius.*) You on
that.

Call first upon the Goddess, Synorix.

[*All face the Goddess. Priestesses,
Children, Populace and Guards
kneel — the others remain standing.*

Synorix. O Thou, that dost inspire
the germ with life,

The child, a thread within the house
of birth,

And give him limbs, then air, and send
him forth

The glory of his father — Thou whose
breath

Is balmy wind to robe our hills with
grass,

And kindle all our vales with myrtle-
blossom,

And roll the golden oceans of our grain,
And sway the long grape-bunches of
our vines,

And fill all hearts with fatness and
the lust

Of plenty — make me happy in my
marriage!

Chorus (*chanting*). Artemis, Artemis,
hear him, Ionian Artemis!

Camma. O Thou that slayest the babe within the womb
 Or in the being born, or after slayest him
 As boy or man, great Goddess, whose storm-voice
 Unsockets the strong oak, and rears his root
 Beyond his head, and strows our fruits, and lays
 Our golden grain, and runs to sea and makes it
 Foam over all the fledged wealth of kings
 And peoples, hear.
 Whose arrow is the plague — whose quick flash splits
 The mid-sea mast, and rifts the tower to the rock,
 And hurls the victor's column down with him
 That crowns it, hear.
 Who causeth the safe earth to shudder and gape,
 And gulf and flatten in her closing chasm
 Domed cities, hear.
 Whose lava-torrents blast and blacken a province
 To a cinder, hear.
 Whose winter-cataracts find a realm and leave it
 A waste of rock and ruin, hear. I call thee
 To make my marriage prosper to my wish!

Chorus. Artemis, Artemis, hear her, Ephesian Artemis!

Camma. Artemis, Artemis, hear me, Galatian Artemis!

I call on our own Goddess in our own Temple.

Chorus. Artemis, Artemis, hear her, Galatian Artemis!

[*Thunder. All rise.*]

Synorix (aside). Thunder! Ay, ay, the storm was drawing hither
 Across the hills when I was being crown'd.

I wonder if I look as pale as she?

Camma. Art thou — still bent — on marrying?

Synorix. Surely — yet These are strange words to speak to Artemis.

Camma. Words are not always what they seem, my King.

I will be faithful to thee till thou die.

Synorix. I thank thee, Camma, — I thank thee.

Camma (turning to Antonius). Antonius,
 Much graced are we that our Queen Rome in you
 Deigns to look in upon our barbarisms.

[*Turns, goes up steps to altar before the Goddess. Takes a cup from*

off the altar. Holds it towards Antonius. Antonius goes up to the foot of the steps, opposite to Synorix.

You see this cup, my lord.

[*Gives it to him.*]

Antonius. Most curious!

The many-breasted mother Artemis Emboss'd upon it.

Camma. It is old, I know not
 How many hundred years. Give it me again.

It is the cup belonging to our own Temple.

[*Puts it back on altar, and takes up the cup of Act I. Showing it to Antonius.*]

Here is another sacred to the Goddess,
 The gift of Synorix; and the Goddess, being

For this most grateful, wills, thro' me her Priestess,

In honor of his gift and of our marriage,
 That Synorix should drink from his own cup.

Synorix. I thank thee, Camma, — I thank thee.

Camma. For — my lord —

It is our ancient custom in Galatia
 That ere two souls be knit for life and death,

They two should drink together from one cup,

In symbol of their married unity,
 Making libation to the Goddess.

Bring me

The costly wines we use in marriages.

[*They bring in a large jar of wine.*]

Camma pours wine into cup.

(*To Synorix.*) See here, I fill it. (*To Antonius.*) Will you drink, my lord?

Antonius. I? Why should I? I am not to be married.

Camma. But that might bring a Roman blessing on us.

Antonius (refusing cup). Thy pardon, Priestess!

Camma. Thou art in the right.

This blessing is for Synorix and for me.
 See first I make libation to the Goddess,

[*Makes libation.*]

And now I drink.

[*Drinks and fills the cup again.*]

Thy turn, Galatian King.

Drink and drink deep — our marriage will be fruitful.

Drink and drink deep, and thou wilt make me happy.

[*Synorix goes up to her. She hands him the cup. He drinks.*]

Synorix. There, Camma! I have almost drain'd the cup —

A few drops left.

Camma. Libation to the Goddess.

[*He throws the remaining drops on the altar and gives Camma the cup.*]

Camma (placing the cup on the altar).
Why then the Goddess hears.
[Comes down and forward to tripod. *Antonius follows.*

Antonius,
Where wast thou on that morning when
I came
To plead to thee for Sinnatus's life,
Beside this temple half a year
ago?

Antonius. I never heard of this request of thine.

Synorix (coming forward hastily to foot of tripod steps). I sought him and I could not find him.

Pray you,

Go on with the marriage rites.

Camma. *Antonius* —

"*Camma!*" who spake?

Antonius. Not I.

Phæbe. Nor any here.

Camma. I am all but sure that some one spake. *Antonius,*

If you had found him plotting against Rome,

Would you have tortured Sinnatus to death?

Antonius. No thought was mine of torture or of death,

But had I found him plotting, I had counsell'd him

To rest from vain resistance. Rome is fated

To rule the world. Then, if he had not listen'd,

I might have sent him prisoner to Rome.

Synorix. Why do you palter with the ceremony?

Go with the marriage rites.

Camma. They are finish'd.

Synorix. How!

Camma. Thou hast drunk deep enough to make me happy.

Dost thou not feel the love I bear to thee

Glow thro' thy veins?

Synorix. The love I bear to thee Glows thro' my veins since first I look'd on thee.

But wherefore slur the perfect ceremony?

The sovereign of Galatia weds his Queen.

Let all be done to the fullest in the sight

Of all the Gods. (*Starts.*) This pain — what is it? — again?

I had a touch of this last year — in — Rome.

Yes, yes. (*To Antonius.*) Your arm — a moment — It will pass.

I reel beneath the weight of utter joy —

This all too happy day, crown — queen at once. [*Staggers.*

O all ye Gods — Jupiter! — Jupiter!

[*Falls backward.*

Camma. Dost thou cry out upon the Gods of Rome!

Thou art Galatian-born? Our Artemis Has vanquish'd their Diana.

Synorix (on the ground). I am poison'd.

She — close the Temple doors. Let her not fly.

Camma (leaning on tripod). Have I not drunk of the same cup with thee?

Synorix. Ay, by the Gods of Rome and all the world,

She too — she too — the bride! the Queen! and I —

Monstrous! I that loved her.

Camma. I loved him.

Synorix. O murderous mad-woman! I pray you lift me

And make me walk awhile. I have heard these poisons

May be walk'd down.

[*Antonius and Publius raise him up.*

My feet are tons of lead, They will break in the earth — I am sinking — hold me —

Let me alone.

[*They leave him; he sinks down on ground.*

Too late — thought myself wise — A woman's dupe. *Antonius,* tell the Senate

I have been most true to Rome — would have been true

To her — if — if —

[*Falls as if dead.*

Camma (coming and leaning over him). So falls the throne of an hour.

Synorix (half rising). Throne? is it thou? the Fates are throned, not we —

Not guilty of ourselves — thy doom and mine —

Thou — coming my way too — *Camma* — good-night. [*Dies.*

Camma (upheld by weeping Priestesses). Thy way? poor worm, crawl down thine own black hole

To the lowest Hell. *Antonius,* is he there?

I meant thee to have follow'd — better thus.

Nay, if my people must be thralls of Rome,

He is gentle, tho' a Roman.

[*Sinks back into the arms of the Priestesses.*

Antonius. Thou art one With thine own people, and tho' a Roman I

Forgive thee, *Camma.*

Camma (raising herself). "CAMMA!"
 why there again
 I am most sure that some one call'd.
 O women,
 Ye will have Roman masters. I am glad
 I shall not see it. Did not some old
 Greek
 Say death was the chief good? He
 had my fate for it,
 Poison'd. (*Sinks back again.*) Have
 I the crown on? I will go
 To meet him, crown'd! crown'd victor
 of my will —
 On my last voyage — but the wind has
 fail'd —
 Growing dark too — but light enough
 to row.

Row to the blessed Isles! the blessed
 Isles! —
 Sinnatus!
 Why comes he not to meet me? It is
 the crown
 Offends him — and my hands are too
 sleepy
 To lift it off.
 [*Phæbe takes the crown off.*
 Who touch'd me then? I thank you.
 [*Rises, with outspread arms.*
 There — league on league of ever-
 shining shore
 Beneath a never-rising sun — I see him —
 "Camma, Camma!" Sinnatus, Sin-
 natus! [*Dies.*

THE FALCON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNT FEDERIGO DEGLI ALBERIGHI.

FILIPPO, *Count's foster-brother.*

THE LADY GIOVANNA.

ELISABETTA, *the Count's nurse.*

SCENE. — AN ITALIAN COTTAGE.
CASTLE AND MOUNTAINS SEEN
THROUGH WINDOW.

ELISABETTA *discovered seated on stool in window darning. The COUNT with Falcon on his hand comes down through the door at back. A withered wreath on the wall.*

Elisabetta. So, my lord, the Lady Giovanna, who hath been away so long, came back last night with her son to the castle.

Count. Hear that, my bird! Art thou not jealous of her?

My princess of the cloud, my plumed purveyor,

My far-eyed queen of the winds — thou that canst soar

Beyond the morning lark, and how-soe'er

Thy quarry wind and wheel, swoop down upon him

Eagle-like, lightning-like — strike, make his feathers

Glance in mid heaven.

[Crosses to chair.

I would thou hadst a mate!
Thy breed will die with thee, and mine with me:

I am as lone and loveless as thyself.

[Sits in chair.

Giovanna here! Ay, ruffle thyself — be jealous!

Thou should'st be jealous of her. Tho' I bred thee

The full-train'd marvel of all falconry, And love thee and thou me, yet if Giovanna

Be here again — No, no! Buss me, my bird!

The stately widow has no heart for me.

Thou art the last friend left me upon earth —

No, no again to that.

[Rises and turns.

My good old nurse, I had forgotten thou wast sitting there.

Elisabetta. Ay, and forgotten thy foster-brother too.

Count. Bird-babble for my falcon! Let it pass.

What art thou doing there?

Elisabetta. Darning, your lordship. We cannot flaunt it in new feathers now:

Nay, if we will buy diamond necklaces To please our lady, we must darn, my lord.

This old thing here *(points to necklace round her neck)*, they are but blue beads — my Piero,

God rest his honest soul, he bought 'em for me,

Ay, but he knew I meant to marry him.

How couldst thou do it, my son? How couldst thou do it?

Count. She saw it at a dance, upon a neck

Less lovely than her own, and long'd for it.

Elisabetta. She told thee as much?

Count. No, no — a friend of hers.

Elisabetta. Shame on her that she took it at thy hands,

She rich enough to have bought it for herself!

Count. She would have robb'd me then of a great pleasure.

Elisabetta. But hath she yet return'd thy love?

Count. Not yet!

Elisabetta. She should return thy necklace then.

Count. Ay, if She knew the giver; but I bound the seller

To silence, and I left it privily At Florence, in her palace.

Elisabetta. And sold thine own
To buy it for her. She not know?

She knows
There's none such other —

Count. Madman anywhere.
Speak freely, tho' to call a madman
mad
Will hardly help to make him sane
again.

Enter FILIPPO.

Filippo. Ah, the women, the women! Ah, Monna Giovanna, you here again! you that have the face of an angel and the heart of a — that's too positive! You that have a score of lovers and have not a heart for any of them — that's positive-negative: you that have *not* the head of a toad, and *not* a heart like the jewel in it — that's too negative; you that have a cheek like a peach and a heart like the stone in it — that's positive again — that's better!

Elisabetta. Sh — sh — Filippo!

Filippo (turns half round). Here has our master been a-glorifying and a-velveting and a-silking himself, and a-peacocking and a-spreading to catch her eye for a dozen year, till he hasn't an eye left in his own tail to flourish among the peahens, and all along o' you, Monna Giovanna, all along o' you!

Elisabetta. Sh—sh—Filippo! Can't you hear that you are saying behind his back what you see you are saying afore his face?

Count. Let him — he never spares me to my face!

Filippo. No, my lord, I never spare your lordship to your lordship's face, nor behind your lordship's back, nor to right, nor to left, nor to round about and back to your lordship's face again, for I'm honest, your lordship.

Count. Come, come, Filippo, what is there in the larder?

[*Elisabetta crosses to fireplace and puts on wood.*]

Filippo. Shelves and hooks, shelves and hooks, and when I see the shelves I am like to hang myself on the hooks.

Count. No bread?

Filippo. Half a breakfast for a rat!

Count. Milk?

Filippo. Three laps for a cat!

Count. Cheese?

Filippo. A supper for twelve mites.

Count. Eggs?

Filippo. One, but addled.

Count. No bird?

Filippo. Half a tit and a hern's bill.

Count. Let be thy jokes and thy jerks, man! Anything or nothing?

Filippo. Well, my lord, if all-but-nothing be anything, and one plate of dried prunes be all-but-nothing, then there is anything in your lordship's larder at your lordship's service, if your lordship care to call for it.

Count. Good mother, happy was the prodigal son,
For he return'd to the rich father; I
But add my poverty to thine. And all
Thro' following of my fancy. Pray
thee make
Thy slender meal out of those scraps
and shreds

Filippo spoke of. As for him and me,
There sprouts a salad in the garden
still.

(*To the Falcon.*) Why didst thou
miss thy quarry yester-even?
To-day, my beauty, thou must dash
us down

Our dinner from the skies. Away,
Filippo!

[*Exit followed by Filippo.*]

Elisabetta. I knew it would come to this. She has beggared him. I always knew it would come to this! (*Goes up to table as if to resume darning, and looks out of window.*) Why, as I live, there is Monna Giovanna coming down the hill from the castle. Stops and stares at our cottage. Ay, ay! stare at it: it's all you have left us. Shame upon you! *She beautiful! sleek as a miller's mouse! Meal enough, meat enough, well fed; but beautiful — bah! Nay, see, why she turns down the path through our little vineyard, and I sneezed three times this morning. Coming to visit my lord, for the first time in her life too! Why, bless the saints! I'll be bound to confess her love to him at last. I forgive her, I forgive her! I knew it would come to this — I always knew it must come to this! (Going up to door during latter part of speech and opens it.) Come in, Madonna, come in. (Retires to front of table and curtsyes as the Lady Giovanna enters, then moves chair towards the hearth.)* Nay, let me place this chair for your ladyship.

[*Lady Giovanna moves slowly down stage, then crosses to chair, looking about her, bows as she sees the Madonna over fireplace, then sits in chair.*]

Lady Giovanna. Can I speak with the Count?

Elisabetta. Ay, my lady, but won't you speak with the old woman first, and tell her all about it and make her happy? for I've been on my knees

every day for these half-dozen years in hope that the saints would send us this blessed morning; and he always took you so kindly, he always took the world so kindly. When he was a little one, and I put the bitterns on my breast to wean him, he made a wry mouth at it, but he took it so kindly, and your ladyship has given him bitterns enough in this world, and he never made a wry mouth at you, he always took you so kindly — which is more than I did, my lady, more than I did — and he so handsome — and bless your sweet face, you look as beautiful this morning as the very Madonna her own self — and better late than never — but come when they will — then or now — it's all for the best, come when they will — they are made by the blessed saints — these marriages. [*Raises her hands.*]

Lady Giovanna. Marriages? I shall never marry again!

Elisabetta (rises and turns). Shame on her then!

Lady Giovanna. Where is the Count?

Elisabetta. Just gone
To fly his falcon.

Lady Giovanna. Call him back and say

I come to breakfast with him.

Elisabetta. Holy mother!
To breakfast! Oh sweet saints! one plate of prunes!

Well, Madam, I will give your message to him. [*Exit.*]

Lady Giovanna. His falcon, and I come to ask for his falcon,
The pleasure of his eyes — boast of his hand —

Pride of his heart — the solace of his hours —

His one companion here — nay, I have heard

That, thro' his late magnificence of living

And this last costly gift to mine own self, [*Shows diamond necklace.*]

He hath become so beggar'd, that his falcon

Ev'n wins his dinner for him in the field.

That must be talk, not truth, but truth or talk,

How can I ask for his falcon?

[*Rises and moves as she speaks.*
O my sick boy!

My daily fading Florio, it is thou
Hath set me this hard task, for when

I say
What can I do — what can I get for thee?

He answers, "Get the Count to give me his falcon,

And that will make me well." Yet if I ask,

He loves me, and he knows I know he loves me!

Will he not pray me to return his love —

To marry him? — (*pause*) — I can never marry him.

His grandsire struck my grandsire in a brawl

At Florence, and my grandsire stabb'd him there.

The feud between our houses is the bar

I cannot cross; I dare not brave my brother,

Break with my kin. My brother hates him, scorns

The noblest-natured man alive, and I — Who have that reverence for him that

I scarce

Dare beg him to receive his diamonds back —

How can I, dare I, ask him for his falcon?

[*Puts diamonds in her casket.*]

Re-enter COUNT and FILIPPO. COUNT turns to FILIPPO.

Count. Do what I said; I cannot do it myself.

Filippo. Why then, my lord, we are pauper'd out and out.

Count. Do what I said!

[*Advances and bows low.*]

Welcome to this poor cottage, my dear lady.

Lady Giovanna. And welcome turns a cottage to a palace.

Count. 'Tis long since we have met!

Lady Giovanna. To make amends I come this day to break my fast with you.

Count. I am much honor'd — yes —

[*Turns to Filippo.*]

Do what I told thee. Must I do it myself?

Filippo. I will, I will. (*Sighs.*) Poor fellow! [*Exit.*]

Count. Lady, you bring your light into my cottage

Who never deign'd to shine into my palace.

My palace wanting you was but a cottage;

My cottage, while you grace it, is a palace.

Lady Giovanna. In cottage or in palace, being still

Beyond your fortunes, you are still the king

Of courtesy and liberality.

Count. I trust I still maintain my courtesy;

My liberality perforce is dead.
Thro' lack of means of giving.

Lady Giovanna. Yet I come
To ask a gift.

[*Moves toward him a little.*
Count. It will be hard, I fear,
To find one shock upon the field when
all

The harvest has been carried.

Lady Giovanna. But my boy —
(*Aside.*) No, no! not yet — I cannot!

Count. Ay, how is he,
That bright inheritor of your eyes —
your boy?

Lady Giovanna. Alas, my Lord
Federigo, he hath fallen
Into a sickness, and it troubles me.

Count. Sick! is it so? why, when
he came last year
To see me hawking, he was well
enough:

And then I taught him all our hawk-
ing-phrases.

Lady Giovanna. Oh yes, and once
you let him fly your falcon.

Count. How charm'd he was! what
wonder? — A gallant boy,
A noble bird, each perfect of the
breed.

Lady Giovanna (*sinks in chair*).
What do you rate her at?

Count. My bird? a hundred
Gold pieces once were offer'd by the
Duke.

I had no heart to part with her for
money.

Lady Giovanna. No, not for money.

[*Count turns away and sighs.*

Wherefore do you sigh?

Count. I have lost a friend of
late.

Lady Giovanna. I could sigh with
you
For fear of losing more than friend,
a son;
And if he leave me — all the rest of
life —
That wither'd wreath were of more
worth to me.

[*Looking at wreath on wall.*

Count. That wither'd wreath is of
more worth to me
Than all the blossom, all the leaf of
this
New-wakening year.

[*Goes and takes down wreath.*

Lady Giovanna. And yet I never
saw
The land so rich in blossom as this
year.

Count (*holding wreath toward her*).
Was not the year when this
was gather'd richer?

Lady Giovanna. How long ago was
that?

Count. Alas, ten summers!
A lady that was beautiful as day
Sat by me at a rustic festival

With other beauties on a mountain
meadow,
And she was the most beautiful of
all;

Then but fifteen, and still as beautiful.
The mountain flowers grew thickly
round about.

I made a wreath with some of these;
I ask'd

A ribbon from her hair to bind it
with;

I whisper'd, Let me crown you Queen
of Beauty,

And softly placed the chaplet on her
head.

A color, which has color'd all my life,
Flush'd in her face; then I was call'd
away;

And presently all rose, and so de-
parted.

Ah! she had thrown my chaplet on
the grass,

And there I found it.

[*Lets his hands fall, holding wreath
despondingly.*

Lady Giovanna (*after pause*). How
long since do you say?

Count. That was the very year be-
fore you married.

Lady Giovanna. When I was mar-
ried you were at the wars.

Count. Had she not thrown my
chaplet on the grass,
It may be I had never seen the wars.

[*Replaces wreath whence he had
taken it.*

Lady Giovanna. Ah, but, my lord,
there ran a rumor then
That you were kill'd in battle. I can
tell you

True tears that year were shed for
you in Florence.

Count. It might have been as well
for me. Unhappily
I was but wounded by the enemy
there

And then imprison'd.

Lady Giovanna. Happily, however,
I see you quite recover'd of your
wound.

Count. No, no, not quite, Madonna,
not yet, not yet.

Re-enter FILIPPO.

Filippo. My lord, a word with you.
Count. Pray, pardon me!

[*Lady Giovanna crosses, and passes
behind chair and takes down
wreath; then goes to chair by
table.*

Count (*to Filippo*). What is it,
Filippo?

Filippo. Spoons, your lordship.

Count. Spoons!

Filippo. Yes, my lord, for wasn't

my lady born with a golden spoon in her ladyship's mouth, and we haven't never so much as a silver one for the golden lips of her ladyship.

Count. Have we not half a score of silver spoons?

Filippo. Half o' one, my lord!

Count. How half of one?

Filippo. I trod upon him even now, my lord, in my hurry, and broke him.

Count. And the other nine?

Filippo. Sold! but shall I not mount with your lordship's leave to her ladyship's castle, in your lordship's and her ladyship's name, and confer with her ladyship's seneschal, and so descend again with some of her ladyship's own appurtenances?

Count. Why — no, man. Only see your cloth be clean.

[*Exit Filippo.*]

Lady Giovanna. Ay, ay, this faded ribbon was the mode in Florence ten years back. What's here? a scroll
Pinn'd to the wreath.

My lord, you have said so much Of this poor wreath that I was bold enough
To take it down, if but to guess what flowers

Had made it; and I find a written scroll

That seems to run in rhymings. Might I read?

Count. Ay, if you will.

Lady Giovanna. It should be if you can.

[*Reads.*] "Dead mountain." Nay, for who could trace a hand
So wild and staggering?

Count. This was penn'd, Madonna, Close to the grating on a winter morn

In the perpetual twilight of a prison, When he that made it, having his right hand

Lamed in the battle, wrote it with his left.

Lady Giovanna. Oh heavens! the very letters seem to shake

With cold, with pain perhaps, poor prisoner! Well,

Tell me the words — or better — for I see

There goes a musical score along with them,

Repeat them to their music.

Count. You can touch No chord in me that would not answer you

In music.

Lady Giovanna. That is musically said.

[*Count takes guitar.* *Lady Giovanna sits listening with wreath*

in her hand, and quietly removes scroll and places it on table at the end of song.

Count (sings, playing guitar). "Dead mountain flowers, dead mountain-meadow flowers,

Dearer than when you made your mountain gay,

Sweeter than any violet of to-day, Richer than all the wide world-wealth of May,

To me, tho' all your bloom has died away,

You bloom again, dead mountain-meadow flowers."

Enter ELISABETTA with cloth.

Elisabetta. A word with you, my lord!

Count (singing). "O mountain flowers!"

Elisabetta. A word, my lord! [*Louder.*]

Count (sings). "Dead flowers!"

Elisabetta. A word, my lord! [*Louder.*]

Count. I pray you pardon me again! [*Lady Giovanna, looking at wreath.*]

Count (to Elisabetta). What is it?

Elisabetta. My lord, we have but one piece of earthenware to serve the salad in to my lady, and that cracked!

Count. Why then, that flower'd bowl my ancestor

Fetch'd from the farthest east — we never use it

For fear of breakage — but this day has brought

A great occasion. You can take it, nurse!

Elisabetta. I did take it, my lord, but what with my lady's coming that had so flurried me, and what with the fear of breaking it, I did break it, my lord: it is broken!

Count. My one thing left of value in the world!

No matter! see your cloth be white as snow!

Elisabetta (pointing thro' window). White? I warrant thee, my son, as the snow yonder on the very tip-top o' the mountain.

Count. And yet to speak white truth, my good old mother, I have seen it like the snow on the moraine.

Elisabetta. How can your lordship say so? There, my lord!

[*Lays cloth.*]

O my dear son, be not unkind to me. And one word more.

[*Going — returns.*]

Count (touching guitar). Good! let it be but one.

Elisabetta. Hath she return'd thy love?

Count. Not yet!

Elisabetta. And will she?

Count (looking at Lady Giovanna). I scarce believe it!

Elisabetta. Shame upon her then!

[*Exit.*]

Count (sings). "Dead mountain flowers"—

Ah well, my nurse has broken
The thread of my dead flowers, as she
has broken

My china bowl. My memory is as
dead. [*Goes and replaces guitar.*]

Strange that the words at home with
me so long

Should fly like bosom friends when
needed most.

So by your leave if you would hear
the rest,

The writing.

*Lady Giovanna (holding wreath
toward him).* There! my lord,
you are a poet,

And can you not imagine that the
wreath,

Set, as you say, so lightly on her head,
Fell with her motion as she rose, and
she,

A girl, a child, then but fifteen, how-
ever

Flutter'd or flatter'd by your notice of
her,

Was yet too bashful to return for it?

Count. Was it so indeed? was it so?
was it so?

[*Leans forward to take wreath, and
touches Lady Giovanna's hand,
which she withdraws hastily; he
places wreath on corner of chair.*]

Lady Giovanna (with dignity). I did
not say, my lord, that it was so;
I said you might imagine it was so.

*Enter FILIPPO with bowl of salad, which
he places on table.*

Filippo. Here's a fine salad for my
lady, for tho' we have been a soldier,
and ridden by his lordship's side, and
seen the red of the battle-field, yet are
we now drill-sergeant to his lordship's
lettuces, and profess to be great in
green things and in garden-stuff.

Lady Giovanna. I thank you, good
Filippo. [*Exit Filippo.*]

*Enter ELISABETTA with bird on a dish
which she places on table.*

Elisabetta (close to table). Here's a
fine fowl for my lady; I had scant
time to do him in. I hope he be not
underdone, for we be undone in the
doing of him.

Lady Giovanna. I thank you, my
good nurse.

*Filippo (re-entering with plate of
prunes).* And here are fine fruits for
my lady—prunes, my lady, from the
tree that my lord himself planted here
in the blossom of his boyhood—and
so I, Filippo, being, with your lady-
ship's pardon, and as your ladyship
knows, his lordship's own foster-
brother, would commend them to
your ladyship's most peculiar ap-
preciation. [*Puts plate on table.*]

Elisabetta. Filippo!

*Lady Giovanna (Count leads her to
table).* Will you not eat with
me, my lord?

Count. I cannot,
Not a morsel, not one morsel. I have
broken

My fast already. I will pledge you.
Wine!

Filippo, wine!

[*Sits near table; Filippo brings
flask, fills the Count's goblet,
then Lady Giovanna's; Elisa-
betta stands at the back of Lady
Giovanna's chair.*]

Count. It is but thin and cold,
Not like the vintage blowing round
your castle.

We lie too deep down in the shadow
here.

Your ladyship lives higher in the sun.

[*They pledge each other and drink.*]

Lady Giovanna. If I might send
you down a flask or two
Of that same vintage? There is iron
in it.

It has been much commended as a
medicine.

I give it my sick son, and if you
be

Not quite recover'd of your wound, the
wine

Might help you. None has ever told
me yet

The story of your battle and your
wound.

Filippo (coming forward). I can tell
you, my lady, I can tell you.

Elisabetta. Filippo! will you take
the word out of your master's own
mouth?

Filippo. Was it there to take? Put
it there, my lord.

Count. Giovanna, my dear lady, in
this same battle

We had been beaten—they were ten
to one.

The trumpets of the fight had echo'd
down,

I and Filippo here had done our
best,

And, having passed unwounded from
the field,

Were seated sadly at a fountain side,
Our horses grazing by us, when a
troop,
Laden with booty and with a flag of
ours

Ta'en in the fight —

Filippo. Ay, but we fought for it
back,

And kill'd —

Elisabetta. Filippo!

Count. A troop of horse —

Filippo. Five hundred!

Count. Say fifty!

Filippo. And we kill'd 'em by the
score!

Elisabetta. Filippo!

Filippo. Well, well, well! I bite my
tongue.

Count. We may have left their fifty
less by five.

However, staying not to count how
many,

But anger'd at their flaunting of our
flag,

We mounted, and we dashed into the
heart of 'em.

I wore the lady's chaplet round my
neck;

It served me for a blessed rosary.

I am sure that more than one brave
fellow owed

His death to the charm in it.

Elisabetta. Hear that, my lady!

Count. I cannot tell how long we
strove before

Our horses fell beneath us; down we
went

Crush'd, hack'd at, trampled under-
foot. The night,

As some cold-manner'd friend may
strangely do us

The truest service, had a touch of
frost

That help'd to check the flowing of
the blood.

My last sight ere I swoon'd was one
sweet face

Crown'd with the wreath. *That seem'd*
to come and go.

They left us there for dead!

Elisabetta. Hear that, my lady!

Filippo. Ay, and I left two fingers
there for dead. See, my lady!

[*Showing his hand.*]

Lady Giovanna. I see, Filippo!

Filippo. And I have small hope of
the gentleman gout in my great toe.

Lady Giovanna. And why, Filippo?

[*Smiling absently.*]

Filippo. I left him there for dead
too!

Elisabetta. She smiles at him — how
hard the woman is!

My lady, if your ladyship were not
Too proud to look upon the garland,
you

Would find it stain'd —

Count (rising). Silence, Elisabetta!

Elisabetta. Stain'd with the blood of
the best heart that ever

Beat for one woman.

[*Points to wreath on chair.*]

Lady Giovanna (rising slowly). I can
eat no more!

Count. You have but trifled with
our homely salad,

But dallied with a single lettuce-leaf;
Not eaten anything.

Lady Giovanna. Nay, nay, I cannot.

You know, my lord, I told you I was
troubled.

My one child Florio lying still so
sick,

I bound myself, and by a solemn
vow,

That I would touch no flesh till he
were well

Here, or else well in Heaven, where all
is well.

[*Elisabetta clears table of bird and
salad: Filippo snatches up the
plate of prunes and holds them to
Lady Giovanna.*]

Filippo. But the prunes, my lady,
from the tree that his lordship —

Lady Giovanna. Not now, Filippo.

My lord Federigo,

Can I not speak with you once more
alone?

Count. You hear, Filippo? My
good fellow, go!

Filippo. But the prunes that your
lordship —

Elisabetta. Filippo!

Count. Ay, prune our company of
thine own and go!

Elisabetta. Filippo!

Filippo (turning). Well, well! the
women! [*Exit.*]

Count. And thou too leave us, my
dear nurse, alone.

Elisabetta (folding up cloth and going).

And me too! Ay, the dear nurse will
leave you alone; but, for all that, she
that has eaten the yolk is scarce like
to swallow the shell.

[*Turns and curtsies stiffly to Lady
Giovanna, then exit. Lady
Giovanna takes out diamond
necklace from casket.*]

Lady Giovanna. I have anger'd your
good nurse; these old-world ser-
vants

Are all but flesh and blood with those
they serve.

My lord, I have a present to return
you,

And afterwards a boon to crave of
you.

Count. No, my most honor'd and
long-worshipt lady,

Poor Federigo degli Alberighi

Takes nothing in return from you
except

Return of his affection — can deny
Nothing to you that you require of
him.

Lady Giovanna. Then I require you
to take back your diamonds —

[*Offering necklace.*]

I doubt not they are yours. No other
heart

Of such magnificence in courtesies
Beats — out of heaven. They seem'd
too rich a prize

To trust with any messenger. I came
In person to return them.

[*Count draws back.*]

If the phrase

"Return" displease you, we will say
— exchange them

For your — for your —

Count (takes a step toward her and then
back). For mine — and what of
mine?

Lady Giovanna. Well, shall we say
this wreath and your sweet
rhymes?

Count. But have you ever worn my
diamonds?

Lady Giovanna. No!

For that would seem accepting of your
love.

I cannot brave my brother — but be
sure

That I shall never marry again, my
lord!

Count. Sure?

Lady Giovanna. Yes!

Count. Is this your brother's order?

Lady Giovanna. No!

For he would marry me to the richest
man

In Florence; but I think you know
the saying —

"Better a man without riches, than
riches without a man."

Count. A noble saying — and acted
on would yield

A nobler breed of men and women.

Lady,

I find you a shrewd bargainer. The
wreath

That once you wore outvalues twenty-
fold

The diamonds that you never deign'd
to wear.

But lay them there for a moment!

[*Points to table.* *Lady Giovanna*
places necklace on table.]

And be you

Gracious enough to let me know the
boon

By granting which, if aught be mine
to grant,

I should be made more happy than I
hoped

Ever to be again.

Lady Giovanna. Then keep your
wreath,

But you will find me a shrewd bar-
gainer still.

I cannot keep your diamonds, for the
gift

I ask for, to my mind and at this
present

Outvalues all the jewels upon earth.

Count. It should be love that thus
outvalues all.

You speak like love, and yet you love
me not.

I have nothing in this world but love
for you.

Lady Giovanna. Love? it is love,
love for my dying boy,

Moves me to ask it of you.

Count. What? my time?

Is it my time? Well, I can give my
time

To him that is a part of you, your son.
Shall I return to the castle with you?

Shall I

Sit by him, read to him, tell him my
tales,

Sing him my songs? You know that
I can touch

The glitter to some purpose.

Lady Giovanna. No, not that!

I thank you heartily for that — and
you,

I doubt not from your nobleness of
nature,

Will pardon me for asking what I ask.

Count. Giovanna, dear Giovanna, I
that once

The wildest of the random youth of
Florence

Before I saw you — all my nobleness
Of nature, as you deign to call it,

draws

From you, and from my constancy to
you.

No more, but speak.

Lady Giovanna. I will. You know
sick people,

More specially sick children, have
strange fancies,

Strange longings; and to thwart them
in their mood

May work them grievous harm at
times, may even

Hasten their end. I would you had a
son!

It might be easier then for you to
make

Allowance for a mother — her — who
comes

To rob you of your one delight on
earth.

How often has my sick boy yearn'd
for this!

I have put him off as often; but to-
day

I dared not — so much weaker, so much worse

For last day's journey. I was weeping for him;

He gave me his hand: "I should be well again

If the good Count would give me — "

Count. Give me.

Lady Giovanna. His falcon.

Count (starts back). My falcon!

Lady Giovanna. Yes, your falcon, Federigo!

Count. Alas, I cannot!

Lady Giovanna. Cannot? Even so!

I fear'd as much. O this unhappy world!

How shall I break it to him? how shall I tell him?

The boy may die: more blessed were the rags

Of some pale beggar-woman seeking alms

For her sick son, if he were like to live,

Than all my childless wealth, if mine must die.

I was to blame — the love you said you bore me —

My lord, we thank you for your entertainment,

[*With a stately curtsey.*

And so return — Heaven help him! — to our son. [*Turns.*

Count (rushes forward). Stay, stay, I am most unlucky, most unhappy.

You never had look'd in on me before,

And when you came and dipt your sovereign head

Thro' these low doors, you ask'd to eat with me.

I had but emptiness to set before you,

No not a draught of milk, no not an egg,

Nothing but my brave bird, my noble falcon,

My comrade of the house, and of the field.

She had to die for it — she died for you.

Perhaps I thought with those of old, the nobler

The victim was, the more acceptable Might be the sacrifice. I fear you scarce

Will thank me for your entertainment now.

Lady Giovanna (returning). I bear with him no longer.

Count. No, Madonna!

And he will have to bear with it as he may.

Lady Giovanna. I break with him for ever!

Count. Yes, Giovanna, But he will keep his love to you for ever!

Lady Giovanna. You? you? not you! My brother! my hard brother!

O Federigo, Federigo, I love you! Spite of ten thousand brothers, Federigo. [*Falls at his feet.*

Count (impetuously). Why then the dying of my noble bird

Hath served me better than her living — then

[*Takes diamonds from table.*

These diamonds are both yours and mine — have won

Their value again — beyond all markets — there

I lay them for the first time round your neck.

[*Lays necklace round her neck.*

And then this chaplet — No more feuds, but peace,

Peace and conciliation! I will make

Your brother love me. See, I tear away

The leaves were darken'd by the battle —

[*Pulls leaves off and throws them down.*

— crown you

Again with the same crown my Queen of Beauty.

[*Places wreath on her head.*

Rise — I could almost think that the dead garland

Will break once more into living blossom.

Nay, nay, I pray you rise.

[*Raises her with both hands.*

We two together Will help to heal your son — your son and mine —

We shall do it — we shall do it.

[*Embraces her.*

The purpose of my being is accomplish'd,

And I am happy!

Lady Giovanna. And I too, Federigo.

BECKET.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE RIGHT HONORABLE EARL OF SELBORNE.

MY DEAR SELBORNE, — To you, the honored Chancellor of our own day, I dedicate this dramatic memorial of your great predecessor; — which, altho' not intended in its present form to meet the exigencies of our modern theatre, has nevertheless — for so you have assured me — won your approbation.

Ever yours,

TENNYSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HENRY II. (*son of the Earl of Anjou*).

THOMAS BECKET, *Chancellor of England, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.*

GILBERT FOLIOT, *Bishop of London.*

ROGER, *Archbishop of York.*

Bishop of Hereford.

HILARY, *Bishop of Chichester.*

JOCELYN, *Bishop of Salisbury.*

JOHN OF SALISBURY

HERBERT OF BOSHAM } *friends of Becket.*

WALTER MAP, *reputed author of "Goliath," Latin poems against the priesthood.*

KING LOUIS OF FRANCE.

GEOFFREY, *son of Rosamund and Henry.*

GRIM, *a monk of Cambridge.*

SIR REGINALD FITZURSE

SIR RICHARD DE BRITO

SIR WILLIAM DE TRACY

SIR HUGH DE MORVILLE

DE BROC OF SALTWOOD CASTLE.

LORD LEICESTER.

PHILIP DE ELEMOSYNA.

TWO KNIGHT TEMPLARS.

JOHN OF OXFORD (*called the Swearer*).

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, *Queen of England (divorced from Louis of France).*

ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD.

MARGERY.

Knights, Monks, Beggars, etc.

PROLOGUE.

A CASTLE IN NORMANDY. INTERIOR
OF THE HALL. ROOFS OF A CITY
SEEN THRO' WINDOWS.

HENRY and BECKET at chess.

Henry. So then our good Arch-
bishop Theobald

Lies dying.

Becket. I am grieved to know as
much.

Henry. But we must have a
mightier man than he

For his successor.

Becket. Have you thought of one?

Henry. A cleric lately poison'd his
own mother,

And being brought before the courts
of the Church,

They but degraded him. I hope they
whipt him.

I would have hang'd him.

Becket.

It is your move.

Henry. Well — there. [*Moves.*
The Church in the pell-mell of
Stephen's time

Hath climb'd the throne and almost
clutch'd the crown;

But by the royal customs of our realm
The Church should hold her baronies
of me,

Like other lords amenable to law.
I'll have them written down and made
the law.

Becket. My liege, I move my bishop.

Henry. And if I live,
No man without my leave shall ex-
communicate

My tenants or my household.

Becket. Look to your king.

Henry. No man without my leave
shall cross the seas

To set the Pope against me — I pray
your pardon.

Becket. Well — will you move ?

Henry. There. [*Moves.*

Becket. Check — you
move so wildly.

Henry. There then ! [*Moves.*

Becket. Why — there then, for you
see my bishop

Hath brought your king to a stand-
still. You are beaten.

Henry (*kicks over the board*). Why,
there then — down go bishop
and king together.

I loathe the being beaten ; had I fixt my
fancy

Upon the game I should have beaten
thee,

But that was vagabond.

Becket. Where, my liege ?

With Phryne,
Or Lais, or thy Rosamund, or another ?

Henry. My Rosamund is no Lais,
Thomas Becket ;

And yet she plagues me too — no
fault in her —

But that I fear the Queen would have
her life.

Becket. Put her away, put her away,
my liege !

Put her away into a nunnery !

Safe enough there from her to whom
thou art bound

By Holy Church. And wherefore
should she seek

The life of Rosamund de Clifford more
Than that of other paramours of
thine ?

Henry. How dost thou know I am
not wedded to her ?

Becket. How should I know ?

Henry. That is my secret, Thomas.

Becket. State secrets should be pa-
tent to the statesman

Who serves and loves his king, and
whom the king

Loves not as statesman, but true lover
and friend.

Henry. Come, come, thou art but
deacon, not yet bishop,

No, nor archbishop, nor my confessor
yet.

I would to God thou wert, for I should
find

An easy father confessor in thee.

Becket. St. Denis, that thou shouldst
not. I should beat

Thy kingship as my bishop hath
beaten it.

Henry. Hell take thy bishop then,
and my kingship too !

Come, come, I love thee and I know
thee, I know thee,

A doter on white pheasant-flesh at
feasts,

A sauce-deviser for thy days of fish,

A dish-designer, and most amorous

Of good old red sound liberal Gascon
wine :

Will not thy body rebel, man, if thou
flatter it ?

Becket. That palate is insane which
cannot tell

A good dish from a bad, new wine
from old.

Henry. Well, who loves wine loves
woman.

Becket. So I do.

Men are God's trees, and women are
God's flowers ;

And when the Gascon wine mounts to
my head,

The trees are all the statelier, and the
flowers

Are all the fairer.

Henry. And thy thoughts,
thy fancies ?

Becket. Good dogs, my liege, well
train'd, and easily call'd

Off from the game.

Henry. Save for some once or twice,
When they ran down the game and
worried it.

Becket. No, my liege, no ! — not
once — in God's name, no !

Henry. Nay, then, I take thee at
thy word — believe thee

The veriest Galahad of old Arthur's
hall.

And so this Rosamund, my true heart-
wife,

Not Eleanor — she whom I love indeed

As a woman should be loved — Why
dost thou smile

So dolorously ?

Becket. My good liege, if a man
Wastes himself among women, how
should he love

A woman, as a woman should be
loved ?

Henry. How shouldst thou know
that never hast loved one ?

Come, I would give her to thy care in
England

When I am out in Normandy or Anjou.

Becket. My lord, I am your subject,
not your —

Henry. Pander.

God's eyes! I know all that — not my
purveyor
Of pleasures, but to save a life — her
life;

Ay, and the soul of Eleanor from hell-
fire.

I have built a secret bower in Eng-
land, Thomas,

A nest in a bush.

Becket. And where, my liege?

Henry (*whispers*). Thine ear.

Becket. That's lone enough.

Henry (*laying paper on table*). This
chart here mark'd "*Her Bower*,"

Take, keep it, friend. See, first, a
circling wood,

A hundred pathways running every-
way,

And then a brook, a bridge; and after
that

This labyrinthine brickwork maze in
maze,

And then another wood, and in the
midst

A garden and my Rosamund. Look,
this line —

The rest you see is color'd green —
but this

Draws thro' the chart to her.

Becket. This blood-red line?

Henry. Ay! blood, perchance, ex-
cept thou see to her.

Becket. And where is she? There
in her English nest?

Henry. Would God she were — no,
here within the city.

We take her from her secret bower in
Anjou

And pass her to her secret bower in
England.

She is ignorant of all but that I love her.

Becket. My liege, I pray thee let me
hence: a widow

And orphan child, whom one of thy
wild barons —

Henry. Ay, ay, but swear to see her
in England.

Becket. Well, well, I swear, but not
to please myself.

Henry. Whatever come between us?

Becket. What should come
between us, Henry?

Henry. Nay — I know not, Thomas.

Becket. What need then? Well —
whatever come between us.

[*Going.*]

Henry. A moment! thou didst help
me to my throne

In Theobald's time, and after by thy
wisdom

Hast kept it firm from shaking; but
now I,

For my realm's sake, myself must be
the wizard

To raise that tempest which will set it
trembling

Only to base it deeper. I, true son
Of Holy Church — no croucher to the
Gregories

That tread the kings their children
underheel —

Must curb her; and the Holy Father,
while

This Barbarossa butts him from his
chair,

Will need my help — be facile to my
hands.

Now is my time. Yet — lest there
should be flashes

And fulminations from the side of
Rome,

An interdict on England — I will
have

My young son Henry crown'd the
King of England,

That so the Papal bolt may pass by
England,

As seeming his, not mine, and fall
abroad.

I'll have it done — and now.

Becket. Surely too young
Even for this shadow of a crown; and
tho'

I love him heartily, I can spy already
A strain of hard and headstrong in

him. Say,
The Queen should play his kingship

against thine!

Henry. I will not think so, Thomas.
Who shall crown him?

Canterbury is dying.

Becket. The next Canterbury.

Henry. And who shall he be, my
friend Thomas? Who?

Becket. Name him; the Holy Father
will confirm him.

Henry (*lays his hand on Becket's
shoulder*). Here!

Becket. Mock me not. I am not
even a monk.

Thy jest — no more. Why — look —
is this a sleeve

For an archbishop?

Henry. But the arm within
Is Becket's, who hath beaten down my

foes.

Becket. A soldier's, not a spiritual
arm.

Henry. I lack a spiritual soldier,
Thomas —

A man of this world and the next to
boot.

Becket. There's Gilbert Foliot.

Henry. He! too thin, too thin.
Thou art the man to fill out the

Church robe;

Your Foliot fasts and fawns too much

for me.

Becket. Roger of York.

Henry. Roger is Roger of York.

King, Church, and State to him but

foils wherein

To set that precious jewel, Roger of York.

No.

Becket. Henry of Winchester?

Henry. Him who crown'd Stephen—King Stephen's brother! No; too royal for me.

And I'll have no more Anselms.

Becket. Sire, the business Of thy whole kingdom waits me: let me go.

Henry. Answer me first.

Becket. Then for thy barren jest Take thou mine answer in bare commonplace—

Nolo episcopari.

Henry. Ay, but *Nolo Archiepiscopari*, my good friend, Is quite another matter.

Becket. A more lawful one. Make me archbishop! Why, my liege, I know

Some three or four poor priests a thousand times

Fitter for this grand function. *Me archbishop!*

God's favor and king's favor might so clash

That thou and I— That were a jest indeed!

Henry. Thou angerest me, man: I do not jest.

Enter ELEANOR and SIR REGINALD FITZURSE.

Eleanor (singing). Over! the sweet summer closes,

The reign of the roses is done—

Henry (to Becket, who is going). Thou shalt not go. I have not ended with thee.

Eleanor (seeing chart on table). This chart with the red line! her bower! whose bower?

Henry. The chart is not mine, but Becket's: take it, Thomas.

Eleanor. Becket! O—ay—and these chessmen on the floor—the king's crown broken! Becket hath beaten thee again—and thou hast kicked down the board. I know thee of old.

Henry. True enough, my mind was set upon other matters.

Eleanor. What matters? State matters?—love matters?

Henry. My love for thee, and thine for me.

Eleanor. Over! the sweet summer closes,

The reign of the roses is done;

Over and gone with the roses,

And over and gone with the sun.

Here; but our sun in Aquitaine lasts longer. I would I were in Aquitaine again—your north chills me.

Over! the sweet summer closes,

And never a flower at the close;

Over and gone with the roses,

And winter again and the snows.

That was not the way I ended it first—but unsymmetrically, preposterously, illogically, out of passion, without art—like a song of the people. Will you have it? The last Parthian shaft of a forlorn Cupid at the King's left breast, and all left-handedness and under-handedness.

And never a flower at the close,

Over and gone with the roses,

Not over and gone with the rose.

True, one rose will outblossom the rest, one rose in a bower. I speak after my fancies, for I am a Troubadour, you know, and won the violet at Toulouse; but my voice is harsh here, not in tune, a nightingale out of season; for marriage, rose or no rose, has killed the golden violet.

Becket. Madam, you do ill to scorn wedded love.

Eleanor. So I do. Louis of France loved me, and I dreamed that I loved Louis of France: and I loved Henry of England, and Henry of England dreamed that he loved me; but the marriage-garland withers even with the putting on, the bright link rusts with the breath of the first after-marriage kiss, the harvest moon is the ripening of the harvest, and the honeymoon is the gall of love; he dies of his honeymoon. I could pity this poor world myself that is no better ordered.

Henry. Dead is he, my Queen? What, altogether? Let me swear nay to that by this cross on thy neck. God's eyes! what a lovely cross! what jewels!

Eleanor. Doth it please you? Take it and wear it on that hard heart of yours—there. [*Gives it to him.*]

Henry (puts it on). On this left breast before so hard a heart, To hide the scar left by thy Parthian dart.

Eleanor. Has my simple song set you jingling? Nay, if I took and translated that hard heart into our Provençal facilities, I could so play about it with the rhyme—

Henry. That the heart were lost in the rhyme and the matter in the metre. May we not pray you, Madam, to spare us the hardness of your facility?

Eleanor. The wells of Castaly are not wasted upon the desert. We did but jest.

Henry. There's no jest on the brows of Herbert there. What is it, Herbert?

Enter HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

Herbert. My liege, the good Archbishop is no more.

Henry. Peace to his soul!

Herbert. I left him with peace on his face—that sweet other-world smile, which will be reflected in the spiritual body among the angels. But he longed much to see your Grace and the Chancellor ere he past, and his last words were a commendation of Thomas Becket to your Grace as his successor in the archbishoprick.

Henry. Ha, Becket! thou rememberest our talk!

Becket. My heart is full of tears—I have no answer.

Henry. Well, well, old men must die, or the world would grow mouldy, would only breed the past again. Come to me to-morrow. Thou hast but to hold out thy hand. Meanwhile the revenues are mine. A-hawking, a-hawking! If I sit, I grow fat.

[Leaps over the table, and exit.]

Becket. He did prefer me to the chancellorship, Believing I should ever aid the Church—

But have I done it? He commends me now

From out his grave to this archbishoprick.

Herbert. A dead man's dying wish should be of weight.

Becket. His should. Come with me. Let me learn at full The manner of his death, and all he said.

[Exeunt Herbert and Becket.]

Eleanor. Fitzurse, that chart with the red line—thou sawest it—her bower.

Fitzurse. Rosamund's?

Eleanor. Ay—there lies the secret of her whereabouts, and the King gave it to his Chancellor.

Fitzurse. To this son of a London merchant—how your Grace must hate him.

Eleanor. Hate him? as brave a soldier as Henry and a goodlier man: but thou—dost thou love this Chancellor, that thou hast sworn a voluntary allegiance to him?

Fitzurse. Not for my love toward him, but because he had the love of the King. How should a baron love a beggar on horseback, with the retinue of three kings behind him, out-royalling royalty? Besides, he help the King to break down our castles, for the which I hate him.

Eleanor. For the which I honor him. Statesman not Churchman he.

A great and sound policy that: I could embrace him for it: you could not see the King for the kinglings.

Fitzurse. Ay, but he speaks to a noble as tho' he were a churl, and to a churl as if he were a noble.

Eleanor. Pride of the plebeian!

Fitzurse. And this plebeian like to be Archbishop!

Eleanor. True, and I have an inherited loathing of these black sheep of the Papacy. Archbishop? I can see further into a man than our hot-headed Henry, and if there ever come feud between Church and Crown, and I do not then charm this secret out of our loyal Thomas, I am not Eleanor.

Fitzurse. Last night I followed a woman in the city here. Her face was veiled, but the back methought was Rosamund—his paramour, thy rival. I can feel for thee.

Eleanor. Thou feel for me!—paramour—rival! King Louis had no paramours, and I loved him none the more. Henry had many, and I loved him none the less—now neither more nor less—not at all; the cup's empty. I would she were but his paramour, for men tire of their fancies; but I fear this one fancy hath taken root, and borne blossom too, and she, whom the King loves indeed, is a power in the State. Rival!—ay, and when the King passes, there may come a crash and embroilment as in Stephen's time; and her children—canst thou not—that secret matter which would heat the King against thee (*whispers him and he starts*). Nay, that is safe with me as with thyself: but canst thou not—thou art drowned in debt—thou shalt have our love, our silence, and our gold—canst thou not—if thou light upon her—free me from her?

Fitzurse. Well, Madam, I have loved her in my time.

Eleanor. No, my bear, thou hast not. My Courts of Love would have held thee guiltless of love—the fine attractions and repulses, the delicacies, the subtleties.

Fitzurse. Madam, I loved according to the main purpose and intent of nature.

Eleanor. I warrant thee! thou wouldst hug thy Cupid till his ribs cracked—enough of this. Follow me this Rosamund day and night, whithersoever she goes; track her, if thou canst, even into the King's lodging, that I may (*clenches her fist*)—may at least have my cry against him and her,—and thou in my way shouldst be jealous of the King, for

thou in thy way didst once, what shall I call it, affect her thine own self.

Fitzurse. Ay, but the young colt winced and whinnied and flung up her heels; and then the King came honeying about her, and this Becket, her father's friend, like enough staved us from her.

Eleanor. Us!

Fitzurse. Yea, by the Blessed Virgin! There were more than I buzzing round the blossom — De Tracy — even that flint De Brito.

Eleanor. Carry her off among you; run in upon her and devour her, one and all of you; make her as hateful to herself and to the King, as she is to me.

Fitzurse. I and all would be glad to wreak our spite on the rosefaced minion of the King, and bring her to the level of the dust, so that the King —

Eleanor. Let her eat it like the serpent, and be driven out of her paradise.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—BECKET'S HOUSE IN LONDON. CHAMBER BARELY FURNISHED. BECKET UNROBING. HERBERT OF BOSHAM AND SERVANT.

Servant. Shall I not help your lordship to your rest?

Becket. Friend, am I so much better than thyself

That thou shouldst help me? Thou art wearied out

With this day's work, get thee to thine own bed.

Leave me with Herbert, friend.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Help me off, Herbert, with this — and this.

Herbert. Was not the people's blessing as we past

Heart-comfort and a balsam to thy blood?

Becket. The people know their Church a tower of strength,

A bulwark against Throne and Bar- onage.

Too heavy for me, this; off with it, Herbert!

Herbert. Is it so much heavier than thy Chancellor's robe?

Becket. No; but the Chancellor's and the Archbishop's

Together more than mortal man can bear.

Herbert. Not heavier than thine armor at Thoulouse?

Becket. O Herbert, Herbert, in my chancellorship

I more than once have gone against the Church.

Herbert. To please the King?

Becket. Ay, and the King of kings, Or justice; for it seem'd to me but just The Church should pay her scutage like the lords.

But hast thou heard this cry of Gilbert Foliot

That I am not the man to be your Primate,

For Henry could not work a miracle — Make an Archbishop of a soldier?

Herbert. Ay, For Gilbert Foliot held himself the man.

Becket. Am I the man? My mother, ere she bore me,

Dream'd that twelve stars fell glittering out of heaven

Into her bosom.

Herbert. Ay, the fire, the light, The spirit of the twelve Apostles enter'd

Into thy making.

Becket. And when I was a child, The Virgin, in a vision of my sleep,

Gave me the golden keys of Paradise. Dream,

Or prophecy, that?

Herbert. Well dream and prophecy both.

Becket. And when I was of Theobald's household, once —

The good old man would sometimes have his jest —

He took his mitre off, and set it on me, And said, "My young Archbishop —

thou wouldst make A stately Archbishop!" Jest or

prophecy there?

Herbert. Both, Thomas, both.

Becket. Am I the man? That rang Within my head last night, and when

I slept

Methought I stood in Canterbury Minster,

And spake to the Lord God, and said, "O Lord,

I have been a lover of wines, and delicate meats,

And secular splendors, and a favorer Of players, and a courtier, and a

feeder

Of dogs and hawks, and apes, and lions, and lynxes.

Am I the man?" And the Lord answer'd me,

"Thou art the man, and all the more the man."

And then I asked again, "O Lord my God,

Henry the King hath been my friend, my brother,

And mine uplifter in this world, and chosen me

For this thy great archbishoprick,
believing
That I should go against the Church
with him,
And I shall go against him with the
Church,
And I have said no word of this to
him:
"Am I the man?" And the Lord
answer'd me,
"Thou art the man, and all the more
the man."
And thereupon, methought, He drew
toward me,
And smote me down upon the Minster
floor.
I fell.

Herbert. God make not thee, but
thy foes, fall.

Becket. I fell. Why fall? Why
did He smite me? What?
Shall I fall off—to please the King
once more?
Not fight—tho' somehow traitor to
the King—
My truest and mine utmost for the
Church?

Herbert. Thou canst not fall that
way. Let traitor be;
For how have fought thine utmost for
the Church,
Save from the throne of thine arch-
bishoprick?
And how been made Archbishop
hadst thou told him,
"I mean to fight mine utmost for the
Church,
Against the King?"

Becket. But dost thou think the
King
Forced mine election?

Herbert. I do think the King
Was potent in the election, and why
not?

Why should not Heaven have so
inspired the King?
Be comforted. Thou art the man—
be thou
A mightier Anselm.

Becket. I do believe thee, then. I
am the man.
And yet I seem appall'd—on such a
sudden

At such an eagle-height I stand and see
The rift that runs between me and the
King.

I served our Theobald well when I
was with him;

I served King Henry well as Chan-
cellor;

I am his no more, and I must serve
the Church.

This Canterbury is only less than
Rome,

And all my doubts I fling from me
like dust,

Winnow and scatter all scruples to
the wind,

And all the puissance of the warrior,
And all the wisdom of the Chancellor,
And all the heap'd experiences of
life,

I cast upon the side of Canterbury—
Our holy mother Canterbury, who
sits

With tatter'd robes. Laics and
barons, thro'

The random gifts of careless kings,
have graspt

Her livings, her advowsons, granges,
farms,

And goodly acres—we will make her
whole;

Not one rood lost. And for these
Royal customs,

These ancient Royal customs—they
are Royal,

Not of the Church—and let them be
anathema,

And all that speak for them ana-
thema.

Herbert. Thomas, thou art moved
too much.

Becket. O Herbert, here
I gash myself asunder from the King,
Tho' leaving each, a wound; mine
own, a grief

To show the scar for ever—his a
hate

Not ever to be heal'd.

*Enter ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD, flying
from SIR REGINALD FITZURSE.
Drops her veil.*

Becket. Rosamund de Clifford!
Rosamund. Save me, father, hide
me—they follow me—and I must
not be known.

Becket. Pass in with Herbert there.
[*Exeunt Rosamund and Herbert
by side door.*

Enter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. The Archbishop!

Becket. Ay! what wouldst thou,
Reginald?

Fitzurse. Why—why, my lord, I
follow'd—follow'd one—

Becket. And then what follows?
Let me follow thee.

Fitzurse. It much imports me I
should know her name.

Becket. What her?

Fitzurse. The woman that I fol-
low'd hither.

Becket. Perhaps it may import her
all as much
Not to be known.

Fitzurse. And what care I for that?
Come, come, my lord Archbishop; I
saw that door
Close even now upon the woman.

Becket. Well ?
Fitzurse (*making for the door*). Nay,
 let me pass, my lord, for I must
 know.
Becket. Back, man!
Fitzurse. Then tell me who and
 what she is.
Becket. Art thou so sure thou fol-
 lowedst anything ?
 Go home, and sleep thy wine off, for
 thine eyes
 Glare stupid-wild with wine.
Fitzurse (*making to the door*). I
 must and will.
 I care not for thy new archbishoprick.
Becket. Back, man, I tell thee !
 What !
 Shall I forget my new archbishoprick
 And smite thee with my crozier on the
 skull ?
 'Fore God, I am a mightier man than
 thou.
Fitzurse. It well befits thy new
 archbishoprick
 To take the vagabond woman of the
 street
 Into thine arms !
Becket. O drunken ribaldry !
 Out, beast ! out, bear !
Fitzurse. I shall remember this.
Becket. Do, and begone !
[Exit Fitzurse.]
[Going to the door sees De Tracy.]
 Tracy, what dost thou here ?
De Tracy. My lord, I follow'd
 Reginald Fitzurse.
Becket. Follow him out !
De Tracy. I shall remember this
 Discourtesy. *[Exit.]*
Becket. Do. These be those baron-
 brutes
 That havock'd all the land in Stephen's
 day.
 Rosamund de Clifford.
Re-enter ROSAMUND and HERBERT.
Rosamund. Here am I.
Becket. Why here ?
 We gave thee to the charge of John
 of Salisbury,
 To pass thee to thy secret bower to-
 morrow.
 Wast thou not told to keep thyself
 from sight ?
Rosamund. Poor bird of passage !
 so I was ; but, father,
 They say that you are wise in winged
 things,
 And know the ways of Nature. Bar
 the bird
 From following the fled summer — a
 chink — he's out,
 Gone ! And there stole into the city
 a breath
 Full of the meadows, and it minded
 me

Of the sweet woods of Clifford, and
 the walks
 Where I could move at pleasure, and
 I thought
 Lo ! I must out or die.
Becket. Or out and die.
 And what hast thou to do with this
 Fitzurse ?
Rosamund. Nothing. He sued my
 hand. I shook at him.
 He found me once alone. Nay —
 nay — I cannot
 Tell you : my father drove him and
 his friends,
 De Tracy and De Brito, from our
 castle.
 I was but fourteen and an April
 then.
 I heard him swear revenge.
Becket. Why will you court it
 By self-exposure ? flutter out at night ?
 Make it so hard to save a moth from
 the fire ?
Rosamund. I have saved many of
 'em. You catch 'em, so,
 Softly, and fling them out to the free
 air.
 They burn themselves *within-door*.
Becket. Our good John
 Must speed you to your bower at
 once. The child
 Is there already.
Rosamund. Yes — the child — the
 child —
 O rare, a whole long day of open field.
Becket. Ay, but you go disguised.
Rosamund. O rare again !
 We'll baffle them, I warrant. What
 shall it be ?
 I'll go as a nun.
Becket. No.
Rosamund. What, not good enough
 Even to play at nun ?
Becket. Dan John with a nun,
 That Map, and these new railers at
 the Church
 May plaister his clean name with
 scurrilous rhymes !
 No !
 Go like a monk, cowling and clouding
 up
 That fatal star, thy Beauty, from the
 squint
 Of lust and glare of malice. Good
 night ! good night !
Rosamund. Father, I am so tender
 to all hardness !
 Nay, father, first thy blessing.
Becket. Wedded ?
Rosamund. Father !
Becket. Well, well ! I ask no more.
 Heaven bless thee ! hence !
Rosamund. O, holy father, when
 thou seest him next,
 Commend me to thy friend.
Becket. What friend ?

Rosamund. The King.

Becket. Herbert, take out a score of armed men
To guard this bird of passage to her cage;
And watch Fitzurse, and if he follow thee,
Make him thy prisoner. I am Chancellor yet.

[*Exeunt Herbert and Rosamund.*
Poor soul! poor soul!
My friend, the King! . . . O thou Great

Seal of England,
Given me by my dear friend the King of England—

We long have wrought together, thou and I—

Now must I send thee as a common friend

To tell the King, my friend, I am against him.

We are friends no more: he will say that, not I.

The worldly bond between us is dissolved,

Not yet the love: can I be under him

As Chancellor? as Archbishop over him?

Go therefore like a friend slighted by one

That hath climb'd up to nobler company.

Not slighted—all but moan'd for: thou must go.

I have not dishonor'd thee—I trust I have not;

Not mangled justice. May the hand that next

Inherits thee be but as true to thee As mine hath been! O, my dear

friend, the King!

O brother!—I may come to martyrdom.

I am martyr in myself already.—
Herbert!

Herbert (re-entering). My lord, the town is quiet, and the moon
Divides the whole long street with light and shade.

No footfall—no Fitzurse. We have seen her home.

Becket. The hog hath tumbled himself into some corner,
Some ditch, to snore away his drunkenness

Into the sober headache,—Nature's moral

Against excess. Let the Great Seal be sent

Back to the King to-morrow.

Herbert. Must that be?
The King may rend the bearer limb from limb.

Think on it again.

Becket. Against the moral excess

No physical ache, but failure it may be

Of all we aim'd at. John of Salisbury
Hath often laid a cold hand on my heats,

And Herbert hath rebuked me even now.

I will be wise and wary, not the soldier

As Foliot swears it.—John, and out of breath!

Enter JOHN OF SALISBURY.

John of Salisbury. Thomas, thou wast not happy taking charge
Of this wild Rosamund to please the King,

Nor am I happy having charge of her—

The included Danaë has escaped again
Her tower, and her Acrisius—where to seek?

I have been about the city.

Becket. Thou wilt find her
Back in her lodging. Go with her—at once—

To-night—my men will guard you to the gates.

Be sweet to her, she has many enemies.

Send the Great Seal by daybreak.
Both, good night!

SCENE II.

STREET IN NORTHAMPTON LEADING
TO THE CASTLE.

ELEANOR'S RETAINERS and BECKET'S RETAINERS fighting. *Enter ELEANOR and BECKET from opposite streets.*

Eleanor. Peace, fools!

Becket. Peace, friends! what idle brawl is this?

Retainer of Becket. They said—her Grace's people—thou wast found—

Liars! I shame to quote 'em—caught, my lord,

With a wanton in thy lodging—Hell requite 'em!

Retainer of Eleanor. My liege, the Lord Fitzurse reported this

In passing to the Castle even now.

Retainer of Becket. And then they mock'd us and we fell upon 'em,

For we would live and die for thee, my lord,

However kings and queens may frown on thee.

Becket (to his Retainers). Go, go—no more of this!

Eleanor (to her Retainers). Away! —
(*Exeunt Retainers.*) Fitz-
urse —

Becket. Nay, let him be.

Eleanor. No, no, my Lord Arch-
bishop,

'Tis known you are midwinter to all
women,

But often in your chancellorship you
served

The follies of the King.

Becket. No, not these follies!

Eleanor. My lord, Fitzurse beheld
her in your lodging.

Becket. Whom?

Eleanor. Well — you know — the
minion, Rosamund.

Becket. He had good eyes!

Eleanor. Then hidden in the street
He watch'd her pass with John of
Salisbury

And heard her cry "Where is this
bower of mine?"

Becket. Good ears too!

Eleanor. You are going to the
Castle,

Will you subscribe the customs?

Becket. I leave that,

Knowing how much you reverence
Holy Church,

My liege, to your conjecture.

Eleanor. I and mine —

And many a baron holds along with
me —

Are not so much at feud with Holy
Church

But we might take your side against
the customs —

So that you grant me one slight favor.

Becket. What?

Eleanor. A sight of that same chart
which Henry gave you

With the red line — "her bower."

Becket. And to what end?

Eleanor. That Church must scorn
herself whose fearful Priest

Sits winking at the license of a king,
Altho' we grant when kings are dan-
gerous

The Church must play into the hands
of kings;

Look! I would move this wanton
from his sight

And take the Church's danger on
myself.

Becket. For which she should be
duly grateful.

Eleanor. True!

Tho' she that binds the bond, herself
should see

That kings are faithful to their mar-
riage vow.

Becket. Ay, Madam, and queens
also.

Eleanor. And queens also!

What is your drift?

Becket. My drift is to the Castle,
Where I shall meet the Barons' and
my King. [*Exit.*]

DE BROC, DE TRACY, DE BRITO, DE
MORVILLE (*passing*).

Eleanor. To the Castle?

De Broc. Ay!

Eleanor. Stir up the King, the
Lords!

Set all on fire against him!

De Brito. Ay, good Madam!

[*Exeunt.*]

Eleanor. Fool! I will make thee
hateful to thy King.

Churl! I will have thee frightened
into France,

And I shall live to trample on thy
grave.

SCENE III. — THE HALL IN NORTH- AMPTON CASTLE.

*On one side of the stage the doors of an
inner Council-chamber, half-open. At
the bottom, the great doors of the Hall.*
ROGER ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, FO-
LIOT BISHOP OF LONDON, HILARY
OF CHICHESTER, BISHOP OF HERE-
FORD, RICHARD DE HASTINGS
(*Grand Prior of Templars*), PHILIP
DE ELEMOSYNA (*The Pope's Al-
moner*), and others. DE BROC,
FITZURSE, DE BRITO, DE MOR-
VILLE, DE TRACY, and other
Barons assembled — a table before
them. JOHN OF OXFORD, *President
of the Council.*

*Enter BECKET and HERBERT OF
BOSHAM.*

Becket. Where is the King?

Roger of York. Gone hawking on
the Nene,

His heart so gall'd with thine ingrati-
tude,

He will not see thy face till thou hast
sign'd

These ancient laws and customs of
the realm.

Thy sending back the Great Seal
madden'd him,

He all but pluck'd the bearer's eyes
away.

Take heed, lest he destroy thee ut-
terly.

Becket. Then shalt thou step into
my place and sign.

Roger of York. Didst thou not
promise Henry to obey

These ancient laws and customs of
the realm?

Becket. Saving the honor of my
order — ay.

Customs, traditions, — clouds that
come and go;

The customs of the Church are Peter's rock.

Roger of York. Saving thine order!
But King Henry sware

That, saving his King's kingship, he
would grant thee

The crown itself. Saving thine order,
Thomas,

Is black and white at once, and comes
to nought.

O bolster'd up with stubbornness and
pride,

Wilt thou destroy the Church in fight-
ing for it,

And bring us all to shame?

Becket. Roger of York,

When I and thou were youths in
Theobald's house,

Twice did thy malice and thy calum-
nies

Exile me from the face of Theo-
bald.

Now I am Canterbury and thou art
York.

Roger of York. And is not York the
peer of Canterbury?

Did not Great Gregory bid St. Austin
here

Found two archbishopricks, London
and York?

Becket. What came of that? The
first archbishop fled,

And York lay barren for a hundred
years.

Why, by this rule, Foliot may claim
the pall

For London too.

Foliot. And with good reason too,
For London had a temple and a
priest

When Canterbury hardly bore a name.

Becket. The pagan temple of a pa-
gan Rome!

The heathen priesthood of a heathen
creed!

Thou goest beyond thyself in petu-
lancy!

Who made thee London? Who, but
Canterbury?

John of Oxford. Peace, peace, my
lords! these customs are no
longer

As Canterbury calls them, wandering
clouds,

But by the King's command are writ-
ten down,

And by the King's command I, John
of Oxford,

The President of this Council, read
them.

Becket. Read!

John of Oxford (reads). "All
causes of advowsons and presenta-
tions, whether between laymen or
clerics, shall be tried in the King's
court."

Becket. But that I cannot sign: for
that would drag

The cleric before the civil judgment-
seat,

And on a matter wholly spiritual.

John of Oxford. "If any cleric be
accused of felony, the Church shall
not protect him; but he shall answer
to the summons of the King's court
to be tried therein."

Becket. And that I cannot sign.

Is not the Church the visible Lord on
earth?

Shall hands that do create the Lord
be bound

Behind the back like laymen-crim-
inals?

The Lord be judged again by Pilate?
No!

John of Oxford. "When a bish-
oprick falls vacant, the King, till
another be appointed, shall receive
the revenues thereof."

Becket. And that I cannot sign. Is
the King's treasury

A fit place for the monies of the
Church,

That be the patrimony of the poor?

John of Oxford. "And when the
vacancy is to be filled up, the King
shall summon the chapter of that
church to court, and the election shall
be made in the Chapel Royal, with
the consent of our lord the King, and
by the advice of his Government."

Becket. And that I cannot sign: for
that would make

Our island-Church a schism from
Christendom,

And weight down all free choice be-
neath the throne.

Foliot. And was thine own election
so canonical,

Good father?

Becket. If it were not, Gilbert
Foliot,

I mean to cross the sea to France, and
lay

My crozier in the Holy Father's
hands,

And bid him re-create me, Gilbert
Foliot.

Foliot. Nay; by another of these
customs thou

Wilt not be suffer'd so to cross the seas
Without the license of our lord the
King.

Becket. That, too, I cannot sign.

DE BROC, DE BRITO, DE TRACY,
FITZURSE, DE MORVILLE, start up
— a clash of swords.

Sign and obey!

Becket. My lords, is this a combat
or a council?

Are ye my masters, or my lord the King?

Ye make this clashing for no love o' the customs

Or constitutions, or whate'er ye call them,

But that there be among you those that hold

Lands reft from Canterbury.

De Broc. And mean to keep them, In spite of thee!

Lords (shouting). Sign, and obey the crown!

Becket. The crown? Shall I do less for Canterbury

Than Henry for the crown? King Stephen gave

Many of the crown lands to those that helpt him;

So did Matilda, the King's mother. Mark,

When Henry came into his own again,

Then he took back not only Stephen's gifts,

But his own mother's, lest the crown should be

Shorn of ancestral splendor. This did Henry.

Shall I do less for mine own Canterbury?

And thou, *De Broc*, that holdest Saltwood Castle——

De Broc. And mean to hold it, or——

Becket. To have my life.

De Broc. The King is quick to anger; if thou anger him,

We wait but the King's word to strike thee dead.

Becket. Strike, and I die the death of martyrdom;

Strike, and ye set these customs by my death

Ringin' their own death-knell thro' all the realm.

Herbert. And I can tell you, lords, ye are all as like

To lodge a fear in Thomas Becket's heart

As find a hare's form in a lion's cave.

John of Oxford. Ay, sheathe your swords, ye will displease the King.

De Broc. Why down then thou! but an he come to Saltwood,

By God's death, thou shalt stick him like a calf! [*Sheathing his sword.*]

Hilary. O my good lord, I do entreat thee——sign.

Save the King's honor here before his barons.

He hath sworn that thou shouldst sign; and now but shuns

The semblance of defeat; I have heard him say

He means no more; so if thou sign, my lord,
That were but as the shadow of an assent.

Becket. 'Twould seem too like the substance, if I sign'd.

Philip de Eleemosyna. My lord, thine ear! I have the ear of the Pope.

As thou hast honor for the Pope our master,

Have pity on him, sorely prest upon By the fierce Emperor and his Antipope.

Thou knowest he was forced to fly to France;

He pray'd me to pray thee to pacify Thy King; for if thou go against thy King,

Then must he likewise go against thy King,

And then thy King might join the Antipope,

And that would shake the Papacy as it stands.

Besides, thy King swore to our cardinals

He meant no harm nor damage to the Church.

Smoother thou his pride——thy signing is but form;

Nay, and should harm come of it, it is the Pope

Will be to blame——not thou. Over and over

He told me thou shouldst pacify the King,

Lest there be battle between Heaven and Earth,

And Earth should get the better——for the time.

Cannot the Pope absolve thee if thou sign?

Becket. Have I the orders of the Holy Father?

Philip de Eleemosyna. Orders, my lord——why, no; for what am I?

The secret whisper of the Holy Father.

Thou, that hast been a statesman, couldst thou always

Blurt thy free mind to the air?

Becket. If Rome be feeble, then should I be firm.

Philip. Take it not that way——balk not the Pope's will.

When he hath shaken off the Emperor,

He heads the Church against the King with thee.

Richard de Hastings (kneeling). Becket, I am the oldest of the Templars;

I knew thy father; he would be mine age

Had he lived now; think of me as thy father!

Behold thy father kneeling to thee,
Becket.

Submit; I promise thee on my salvation

That thou wilt hear no more o' the customs.

Becket. What!

Hath Henry told thee? hast thou talk'd with him?

Another Templar (kneeling). Father, I am the youngest of the Templars,

Look on me as I were thy bodily son,
For, like a son, I lift my hands to thee.

Philip. Wilt thou hold out for ever,
Thomas Becket?

Dost thou not hear?

Becket (signs). Why — there then — there — I sign,

And swear to obey the customs.

Foliot. Is it thy will,
My lord Archbishop, that we too should sign?

Becket. O ay, by that canonical obedience

Thou still hast owed thy father, Gilbert Foliot.

Foliot. Loyally and with good faith,
my lord Archbishop?

Becket. O ay, with all that loyalty and good faith

Thou still hast shown thy primate,
Gilbert Foliot.

[*Becket draws apart with Herbert.*

Herbert, Herbert, have I betray'd the Church?

I'll have the paper back — blot out my name.

Herbert. Too late, my lord: you see they are signing there.

Becket. False to myself — it is the will of God

To break me, prove me nothing of myself!

This Almoner hath tasted Henry's gold.

The cardinals have finger'd Henry's gold.

And Rome is venal ev'n to rottenness. I see it, I see it.

I am no soldier, as he said — at least No leader. Herbert, till I hear from the Pope

I will resign myself from all my functions.

If fast and prayer, the lacerating scourge —

Foliot (from the table). My lord Archbishop, thou hast yet to seal.

Becket. First, Foliot, let me see what I have sign'd.

[*Goes to the table.*

What, this! and this! — what! new and old together!

Seal? If a seraph shouted from the sun,

And bade me seal against the rights of the Church,

I would anathematize him. I will not seal. [*Exit with Herbert.*

Enter KING HENRY.

Henry. Where's Thomas? hath he sign'd? show me the papers!

Sign'd and not seal'd! How's that?

John of Oxford. He would not seal. And when he sign'd, his face was stormy-red —

Shame, wrath, I know not what. He sat down there

And dropt it in his hands, and then a paleness,

Like the wan twilight after sunset, crept

Up even to the tonsure, and he groan'd,

"False to myself! It is the will of God!"

Henry. God's will be what it will, the man shall seal,

Or I will seal his doom. My burgher's son —

Nay, if I cannot break him as the prelate,

I'll crush him as the subject. Send for him back.

[*Sits on his throne.*

Barons and bishops of our realm of England,

After the nineteen winters of King Stephen —

A reign which was no reign, when none could sit

By his own hearth in peace; when murder common

As nature's death, like Egypt's plague, had fill'd

All things with blood; when every doorway blush'd,

Dash'd red with that unhallow'd pass-over;

When every baron ground his blade in blood;

The household dough was kneaded up with blood;

The millwheel turn'd in blood; the wholesome plow

Lay rusting in the furrow's yellow weeds,

Till famine dwarf'd the race — I came, your King!

Nor dwelt alone, like a soft lord of the East,

In mine own hall, and sucking thro' fools' ears

The flatteries of corruption — went abroad

Thro' all my counties, spied my people's ways;

Yea, heard the churl against the baron
 — yea,
 And did him justice ; sat in mine own
 courts
 Judging my judges, that had found a
 King
 Who ranged confusions, made the
 twilight day,
 And struck a shape from out the
 vague, and law
 From madness. And the event — our
 fallows till'd,
 Much corn, repeopled towns, a realm
 again.
 So far my course, albeit not glassy-
 smooth,
 Had prosper'd in the main, but sud-
 denly
 Jarr'd on this rock. A cleric violated
 The daughter of his host, and mur-
 der'd him.
 Bishops — York, London, Chichester,
 Westminster —
 Ye haled this tinsured devil into your
 courts ;
 But since your canon will not let you
 take
 Life for a life, ye but degraded him
 Where I had hang'd him. What doth
 hard murder care
 For degradation ? and that made me
 muse,
 Being bounden by my coronation oath
 To do men justice. Look to it, your
 own selves !
 Say that a cleric murder'd an arch-
 bishop,
 What could ye do ? Degrade, imprison
 him —
 Not death for death.
John of Oxford. But I, my liege,
 could swear,
 To death for death.
Henry. And, looking thro' my reign,
 I found a hundred ghastly murders
 done
 By men, the scum and offal of the
 Church ;
 Then, glancing thro' the story of this
 realm,
 I came on certain wholesome usages,
 Lost in desuetude, of my grandsire's
 day,
 Good royal customs — had them writ-
 ten fair
 For John, of Oxford here to read to
 you.
John of Oxford. And I can easily
 swear to these as being
 The King's will and God's will and
 justice ; yet
 I could but read a part to-day, be-
 cause —
Fitzurse. Because my lord of Can-
 terbury —
De Tracy. Ay,

This lord of Canterbury —
De Brito. As is his wont
 Too much of late whene'er your royal
 rights
 Are mooted in our councils —
Fitzurse. — made an uproar.
Henry. And Becket had my bosom
 on all this ;
 If ever man by bonds of grateful-
 ness —
 I raised him from the puddle of the
 gutter,
 I made him porcelain from the clay
 of the city —
 Thought that I knew him, err'd thro'
 love of him,
 Hoped, were he chosen archbishop,
 Church and Crown,
 Two sisters gliding in an equal
 dance,
 Two rivers gently flowing side by
 side —
 But no !
 The bird that moults sings the same
 song again,
 The snake that sloughs comes out a
 snake again.
 Snake — ay, but he that lookt a fang-
 less one,
 Issues a venomous adder.
 For he, when having doff'd the Chan-
 cellor's robe —
 Flung the Great Seal of England in
 my face —
 Claim'd some of our crown lands for
 Canterbury —
 My comrade, boon companion, my co-
 reveller,
 The master of his master, the King's
 king. —
 God's eyes ! I had meant to make him
 all but king.
 Chancellor-Archbishop, he might well
 have sway'd
 All England under Henry, the young
 King,
 When I was hence. What did the
 traitor say ?
 Falseto himself, batten-fold falseto me !
 The will of God — why, then it is my
 will —
 Is he coming ?
Messenger (entering). With a crowd
 of worshippers,
 And holds his cross before him thro'
 the crowd,
 As one that puts himself in sanctuary.
Henry. His cross !
Roger of York. His cross ! I'll front
 him, cross to cross.
 [Exit Roger of York.
Henry. His cross ! it is the traitor
 that imputes
 Treachery to his King !
 It is not safe for me to look upon
 him.

Away — with me !

[*Goes in with his Barons to the Council Chamber, the door of which is left open.*]

Enter BECKET, holding his cross of silver before him. The BISHOPS come round him.

Hereford. The King will not abide thee with thy cross.

Permit me, my good lord, to bear 'it for thee,

Being thy chaplain.

Becket. No : it must protect me.

Herbert. As once he bore the standard of the Angles,

So now he bears the standard of the angels.

Foliot. I am the Dean of the province : let me bear it.

Make not thy King a traitorous murderer.

Becket. Did not your barons draw their swords against me ?

Enter ROGER OF YORK, with his cross, advancing to BECKET.

Becket. Wherefore dost thou presume to bear thy cross,

Against the solemn ordinance from Rome,

Out of thy province ?

Roger of York. Why dost thou presume,

Arm'd with thy cross, to come before the King ?

If Canterbury bring his cross to court, Let York bear his to mate with Canterbury.

Foliot (seizing hold of Becket's cross).

Nay, nay, my lord, thou must not brave the King.

Nay, let me have it. I will have it !

Becket. Away ! [*Flinging him off.*]

Foliot. He fasts, they say, this mired Hercules !

He fast ! is that an arm of fast ? My lord,

Hadst thou not sign'd, I had gone along with thee ;

But thou the shepherd hast betray'd the sheep,

And thou art perjured, and thou wilt not seal.

As Chancellor thou wast against the Church,

Now as Archbishop goest against the King ;

For, like a fool, thou knowst no middle way.

Ay, ay ! but art thou stronger than the King ?

Becket. Strong — not in mine own self, but Heaven ; true

To either function, holding it ; and thou

Fast, scourge thyself, and mortify thy flesh,

Not spirit — thou remainest Gilbert Foliot,

A worldly follower of the worldly strong.

I, bearing this great ensign, make it clear

Under what Prince I fight.

Foliot. My lord of York,

Let us go in to the Council, where our bishops

And our great lords will sit in judgment on him.

Becket. Sons sit in judgment on their father ! — then

The spire of the Holy Church may prick the graves —

Her crypt among the stars. Sign ? seal ? I promised

The King to obey these customs, not yet written,

Saving mine order ; true too, that when written

I sign'd them — being a fool, as Foliot call'd me.

I hold not by my signing. Get ye hence,

Tell what I say to the King.

[*Exeunt Hereford, Foliot, and other Bishops.*]

Roger of York. The Church will hate thee. [*Exit.*]

Becket. Serve my best friend and make him my worst foe ;

Fight for the Church, and set the Church against me !

Herbert. To be honest is to set all knaves against thee.

Ah ! Thomas, excommunicate them all !

Hereford (re-entering). I cannot brook the turmoil thou hast raised.

I would, my lord Thomas of Canterbury,

Thou wert plain Thomas and not Canterbury,

Or that thou wouldst deliver Canterbury

To our King's hands again, and be at peace.

Hilary (re-entering). For hath not thine ambition set the Church

This day between the hammer and the anvil —

Faalty to the King, obedience to thyself ?

Herbert. What say the bishops ?

Hilary. Some have pleaded for him, But the King rages — most are with the King ;

And some are reeds, that one time sway to the current ;

And to the wind another. But we hold
Thou art forsworn; and no forsworn
Archbishop
Shall helm the Church. We therefore
place ourselves
Under the shield and safeguard of the
Pope,
And cite thee to appear before the
Pope,
And answer thine accusers. . . . Art
thou deaf?

Becket. I hear you. [*Clash of arms.*]

Hilary. Dost thou hear
those others?

Becket. Ay!

Roger of York (re-entering). The
King's "God's eyes!" come now
so thick and fast,

We fear that he may reave thee of
thine own.

Come on, come on! it is not fit for us
To see the proud Archbishop mutilated.

Say that he blind thee and tear out
thy tongue.

Becket. So be it. He begins at top
with me;

They crucified St. Peter downward.

Roger of York. Nay,

But for their sake who stagger betwixt
thine

Appeal, and Henry's anger, yield.

Becket. Hence, Satan!

[*Exit Roger of York.*]

Fitzurse (re-entering). My lord, the
King demands three hundred
marks,

Due from his castles of Berkham-
stead and Eye

When thou thereof wast warden.

Becket. Tell the King

I spent thrice that in fortifying his
castles.

De Tracy (re-entering). My lord,
the King demands seven hun-
dred marks,

Lent at the siege of Thoulouse by the
King.

Becket. I led seven hundred knights
and fought his wars.

De Brito (re-entering). My lord, the
King demands five hundred
marks,

Advanced thee at his instance by the
Jews,

For which the King was bound secu-
rity.

Becket. I thought it was a gift; I
thought it was a gift.

*Enter LORD LEICESTER (followed by
Barons and Bishops).*

Lord Leicester. My lord, I come
unwillingly. The King
Demands a strict account of all those
revenues

From all the vacant sees and abbacies,
Which came into thy hands when
Chancellor.

Becket. How much might that
amount to, my lord Leicester?

Leicester. Some thirty — forty thou-
sand silver marks.

Becket. Are these your customs? O
my good lord Leicester,
The King and I were brothers. All I
had

I lavish'd for the glory of the
King;

I shone from him, for him, his glory,
his

Reflection: now the glory of the
Church

Hath swallow'd up the glory of the
King;

I am his no more, but hers. Grant
me one day

To ponder these demands.

Leicester. Hear first thy sentence!
The King and all his lords —

Becket. Son, first hear me!

Leicester. Nay, nay, canst thou, that
holdest thine estates

In fee and barony of the King, decline
The judgment of the King?

Becket. The King! I hold
Nothing in fee and barony of the
King.

Whatever the Church owns — she
holds it in

Free and perpetual alms, unsubject to
One earthly sceptre.

Leicester. Nay, but hear
thy judgment.

The King and all his barons —

Becket. Judgment! Barons!

Who but the bridegroom dares to
judge the bride,

Or he the bridegroom may appoint?
Not he

That is not of the house, but from the
street

Stain'd with the mire thereof.

I had been so true
To Henry and mine office that the
King

Would throne me in the great Arch-
bishoprick:

And I, that knew mine own infirmity,
For the King's pleasure rather than

God's cause

Took it upon me — err'd thro' love of
him.

Now therefore God from me withdraws
Himself,

And the King too.

What! forty thousand marks!

Why thou, the King, the Pope, the
Saints, the world,

Know that when made Archbishop I
was freed,

Before the Prince and chief Justiciary,

From every bond and debt and obligation
Incurr'd as Chancellor.

Hear me, son.

As gold
Outvalues dross, light darkness, Abel
Cain,
The soul the body, and the Church
the Throne,
I charge thee, upon pain of mine
anathema,
That thou obey, not me, but God in
me,
Rather than Henry. I refuse to stand
By the King's censure, make my cry
to the Pope,
By whom I will be judged; refer my-
self,
The King, these customs, all the
Church, to him,
And under his authority — I depart.

[*Going.*

[*Leicester looks at him doubtingly.*
Am I a prisoner?

Leicester. By St. Lazarus, no!
I am confounded by thee. Go in
peace.

De Broc. In peace now — but after.
Take that for earnest.

[*Fling a bone at him from the rushes.*

DE BRITO, FITZURSE, DE TRACY and
others (*flinging wisps of rushes*).

Ay, go in peace, caitiff, caitiff! And
that too, perjured prelate — and that,
turncoat shaveling! There, there,
there! traitor, traitor, traitor!

Becket. Mannerless wolves!

[*Turning and facing them.*

Herbert. Enough, my lord, enough!

Becket. Barons of England and of
Normandy,

When what ye shake at doth but
seem to fly,

True test of coward, ye follow with
a yell.

But I that threw the mightiest knight
of France,

Sir Engelram de Trie, —

Herbert. Enough, my lord.

Becket. More than enough. I play
the fool again.

Enter HERALD.

Herald. The King commands you,
upon pain of death,
That none should wrong or injure
your Archbishop.

Foliot. Deal gently with the young
man Absalom.

[*Great doors of the Hall at the back
open, and discover a crowd.*

They shout: Blessed is he that
cometh in the name of the
Lord!

SCENE IV. — REFECTORY OF THE
MONASTERY AT NORTHAMPTON. A
BANQUET ON THE TABLES.

Enter BECKET. BECKET'S RETAINERS.

First Retainer. Do thou speak first.

Second Retainer. Nay, thou! Nay,
thou! Hast not thou drawn the short
straw?

First Retainer. My lord Archbishop,
wilt thou permit us —

Becket. To speak without stammer-
ing and like a free man? Ay.

First Retainer. My lord, permit us
then to leave thy service.

Becket. When?

First Retainer. Now.

Becket. To-night?

First Retainer. To-night, my lord.

Becket. And why?

First Retainer. My lord, we leave
thee not without tears.

Becket. Tears? Why not stay with
me then?

First Retainer. My lord, we cannot
yield thee an answer altogether to thy
satisfaction.

Becket. I warrant you, or your
own either. Shall I find you one?
The King hath frowned upon me.

First Retainer. That is not altogether
our answer, my lord.

Becket. No; yet all but all. Go,
go! Ye have eaten of my dish and
drunken of my cup for a dozen years.

First Retainer. And so we have.
We mean thee no wrong. Wilt thou
not say, "God bless you," ere we go?

Becket. God bless you all! God
redden your pale blood! But mine is
human-red; and when ye shall hear it
is poured out upon earth, and see it
mounting to Heaven, may God bless
you, that seems sweet to you now, will
blast and blind you like a curse.

First Retainer. We hope not, my
lord. Our humblest thanks for your
blessing. Farewell!

[*Exeunt Retainers.*

Becket. Farewell, friends! fare-
well, swallows! I wrong the bird;
she leaves only the nest she built, they
leave the builder. Why? Am I to
be murdered to-night?

[*Knocking at the door.*

Attendant. Here is a missive left at
the gate by one from the castle.

Becket. Cornwall's hand or Leices-
ter's: they write marvellously alike.

[*Reading.*

"Fly at once to France, to King
Louis of France: there be those about
our King who would have thy blood."

Was not my lord of Leicester bid-
den to our supper?

Attendant. Ay, my lord, and divers other earls and barons. But the hour is past, and our brother, Master Cook, he makes moan that all be a-getting cold.

Becket. And I make my moan along with him. Cold after warm, winter after summer, and the golden leaves, these earls and barons, that clung to me, frosted off me by the first cold frown of the King. Cold, but look how the table steams, like a heathen altar; nay, like the altar at Jerusalem. Shall God's good gifts be wasted? None of them here! Call in the poor from the streets, and let them feast.

Herbert. That is the parable of our blessed Lord.

Becket. And why should not the parable of our blessed Lord be acted again? Call in the poor! The Church is ever at variance with the kings, and ever at one with the poor. I marked a group of lazars in the market-place — half-rag, half-sore — beggars, poor rogues (Heaven bless 'em) who never saw or dreamed of such a banquet. I will amaze them. Call them in, I say. They shall henceforward be my earls and barons — our lords and masters in Christ Jesus. [*Exit Herbert.*]

If the King hold his purpose, I am myself a beggar. Forty thousand marks! forty thousand devils — and these craven bishops!

A Poor Man (entering) with his dog. My lord Archbishop, may I come in with my poor friend, my dog? The King's verdurer caught him a-hunting in the forest, and cut off his paws. The dog followed his calling, my lord. I ha' carried him ever so many miles in my arms, and he licks my face and moans and cries out against the King.

Becket. Better thy dog than thee. The King's courts would use thee worse than thy dog — they are too bloody. Were the Church king, it would be otherwise. Poor beast! poor beast! set him down. I will bind up his wounds with my napkin. Give him a bone, give him a bone! Who misuses a dog would misuse a child — they cannot speak for themselves. Past help! his paws are past help. God help him!

Enter the BEGGARS (and seat themselves at the Tables). BECKET and HERBERT wait upon them.

First Beggar. Swine, sheep, ox — here's a French supper. When thieves fall out, honest men —

Second Beggar. Is the Archbishop a thief who gives thee thy supper?

First Beggar. Well, then, how does

it go? When honest men fall out, thieves — no, it can't be that.

Second Beggar. Who stole the widow's one sitting hen o' Sunday, when she was at mass?

First Beggar. Come, come! thou hadst thy share on her. Sittinghen! Our Lord Becket's our great sittinghen cock, and we shouldn't ha' been sitting here if the barons and bishops hadn't been a-sitting on the Archbishop.

Becket. Ay, the princes sat in judgment against me, and the Lord hath prepared your table — *Sederunt principes, ederunt pauperes.*

A Voice. Becket, beware of the knife!

Becket. Who spoke?

Third Beggar. Nobody, my lord. What's that, my lord?

Becket. Venison.

Third Beggar. Venison?

Becket. Buck; deer, as you call it.

Third Beggar. King's meat! By the Lord, won't we pray for your lordship!

Becket. And, my children, your prayers will do more for me in the day of peril than dawns darkly and drearily over the house of God — yea, and in the day of judgment also, than the swords of the craven sycophants would have done had they remained true to me whose bread they have partaken. I must leave you to your banquet. Feed, feast, and be merry. Herbert, for the sake of the Church itself, if not for my own, I must fly to France to-night. Come with me.

[*Exit with Herbert.*]

Third Beggar. Here — all of you — my lord's health (*they drink*). Well — if that isn't goodly wine —

First Beggar. Then there isn't a goodly wench to serve him with it: they were fighting for her to-day in the street.

Third Beggar. Peace!

First Beggar. The black sheep baaced to the miller's ewe-lamb,

The miller's away for to-night.

Black sheep, quoth she, too black a sin for me.

And what said the black sheep, my masters?

We can make a black sin white.

Third Beggar. Peace!

First Beggar. "Ewe lamb, ewe lamb, I am here by the dam."

But the miller came home that night,

And so dusted his back with the meal in his sack,

That he made the black sheep white.

Third Beggar. Be we not of the family? be we not a-supping with the head of the family? be we not in my lord's own refractory? Out from among us; thou art our black sheep.

Enter the four KNIGHTS.

Fitzurse. Sheep, said he? And sheep without the shepherd, too. Where is my lord Archbishop? Thou the lustiest and lousiest of this Cain's brotherhood, answer.

Third Beggar. With Cain's answer, my lord. Am I his keeper? Thou shouldst call him Cain, not me.

Fitzurse. So I do, for he would murder his brother the State.

Third Beggar (rising and advancing). No, my lord; but because the Lord hath set his mark upon him that no man should murder him.

Fitzurse. Where is he? where is he?

Third Beggar. With Cain belike, in the land of Nod, or in the land of France for aught I know.

Fitzurse. France! Ha! De Morville, Tracy, Brito—fled is he? Cross swords all of you! swear to follow him! Remember the Queen!

[*The four Knights cross their swords.*]

De Brito. They mock us; he is here.

[*All the Beggars rise and advance upon them.*]

Fitzurse. Come, you filthy knaves, let us pass.

Third Beggar. Nay, my lord, let us pass. We be a-going home after our supper in all humbleness, my lord; for the Archbishop loves humbleness, my lord; and though we be fifty to four, we daren't fight you with our crutches, my lord. There now, if thou hast not laid hands upon me! and my fellows know that I am all one scale like a fish. I pray God I haven't given thee my leprosy, my lord.

[*Fitzurse shrinks from him and another presses upon De Brito.*]

De Brito. Away, dog!

Fourth Beggar. And I was bit by a mad dog o' Friday, an' I be half dog already by this token, that tho' I can drink wine I cannot bide water, my lord; and I want to bite, I want to bite, and they do say the very breath catches.

De Brito. Insolent clown. Shall I smite him with the edge of the sword?

De Morville. No, nor with the flat of it either. Smite the shepherd and the sheep are scattered. Smite the sheep and the shepherd will excommunicate thee.

De Brito. Yet my fingers itch to beat him into nothing.

Fifth Beggar. So do mine, my lord. I was born with it, and sulphur won't

bring it out o' me. But for all that the Archbishop washed my feet o' Tuesday. He likes it, my lord.

Sixth Beggar. And see here, my lord, this rag fro' the gangrene i' my leg. It's humbling—it smells o' human natur'. Wilt thou smell it, my lord? for the Archbishop likes the smell on it, my lord; for I be his lord and master i' Christ, my lord.

De Morville. Faugh! we shall all be poisoned. Let us go.

[*They draw back, Beggars following.*]

Seventh Beggar. My lord, I ha' three sisters a-dying at home o' the sweating sickness. They be dead while I be a-supping.

Eighth Beggar. And I ha' nine darters i' the spital that be dead ten times o'er i' one day wi' the putrid fever; and I bring the taint on it along wi' me, for the Archbishop likes it, my lord.

[*Pressing upon the Knights till they disappear thro' the door.*]

Third Beggar. Crutches, and itches, and leprosy, and ulcers, and gangrenes, and running sores, praise ye the Lord, for to-night ye have saved our Archbishop!

First Beggar. I'll go back again. I hain't half done yet.

Herbert of Bosham (entering). My friends, the Archbishop bids you good-night. He hath retired to rest, and being in great jeopardy of his life, he hath made his bed between the altars, from whence he sends me to bid you this night pray for him who hath fed you in the wilderness.

Third Beggar. So we will—so we will, I warrant thee. Becket shall be king and the Holy Father shall be king, and the world shall live by the King's venison and the bread o' the Lord, and there shall be no more poor for ever. Hurrah! Vive le roy! That's the English of it.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ROSAMUND'S BOWER.
A GARDEN OF FLOWERS. IN THE
MIDST A BANK OF WILD-FLOWERS
WITH A BENCH BEFORE IT.

Voices heard singing among the trees.

DUET.

1. Is it the wind of the dawn that I hear in the pine overhead?
2. No; but the voice of the deep as it hollows the cliffs of the land.
1. Is there a voice coming up with the voice of the deep from the strand,

One coming up with a song in the
flush of the glimmering red ?

2. Love that is born of the deep com-
ing up with the sun from the sea.

1. Love that can shape or can shatter
a life till the life shall have fled ?

2. Nay, let us welcome him, Love
that can lift up a life from the
dead.

1. Keep him away from the lone little
isle. Let us be, let us be.

2. Nay, let him make it his own, let
him reign in it — he, it is he,

Love that is born of the deep com-
ing up with the sun from the
sea.

Enter HENRY and ROSAMUND.

Rosamund. Be friends with him
again — I do beseech thee.

Henry. With Becket ? I have but
one hour with thee —

Sceptre and crozier clashing, and the
mitre

Grappling the crown — and when I
flee from this

For a gasp of freer air, a breathing-
while

To rest upon thy bosom and forget
him —

Why thou, my bird, thou pipest
Becket, Becket —

Yea, thou my golden dream of Love's
own bower,

Must be the nightmare breaking on
my peace

With "Becket."

Rosamund. O my life's life, not to
smile

Is all but death to me. My sun, no
cloud !

Let there not be one frown in this one
hour.

Out of the many thine, let this be
mine !

Look rather thou all-royal as when
first

I met thee.

Henry. Where was that ?

Rosamund. Forgetting that
Forgets me too.

Henry. Nay, I remember it well.
There on the moors.

Rosamund. And in a narrow path.
A plover flew before thee. Then I saw

Thy high black steed among the flam-
ing furze,

Like sudden night in the main glare
of day.

And from that height something was
said to me

I knew not what.

Henry. I ask'd the way.

Rosamund. I think so.
So I lost mine.

Henry. Thou wast too shamed to
answer.

Rosamund. Too scared — so young !

Henry. The rosebud of my rose ! —
Well, well, no more of *him* — I have
sent his folk,

His kin, all his belongings, overseas ;
Age, orphans, and babe-breasting
mothers — all

By hundreds to him — there to beg,
starve, die —

So that the fool King Louis feed them
not.

The man shall feel that I can strike
him yet.

Rosamund. Babes, orphans, moth-
ers ! is that royal, Sire ?

Henry. And I have been as royal
with the Church.

He shelter'd in the Abbey of Pon-
tigny.

There wore his time studying the
canon law

To work it against me. But since he
cursed

My friends at Veselay, I have let
them know,

That if they keep him longer as their
guest,

I scatter all their cowls to all the
hells.

Rosamund. And is that altogether
royal ?

Henry. Traitor !

Rosamund. A faithful traitress to
thy royal fame.

Henry. Fame ! what care I for
fame ? Spite, ignorance, envy,
Yea, honesty too, paint her what way
they will.

Fame of to-day is infamy to-morrow ;
Infamy of to-day is fame to-morrow ;
And round and round again. What
matters ? Royal —

I mean to leave the royalty of my
crown

Unlessen'd to mine heirs.

Rosamund. Still — thy fame too :

I say that should be royal.

Henry. And I say,

I care not for thy saying.

Rosamund. And I say,

I care not for *thy* saying. A greater
King

Than thou art, Love, who cares not
for the word,

Makes "care not" — care. There
have I spoken true ?

Henry. Care dwell with me for ever,
when I cease

To care for thee as ever !

Rosamund. No need ! no need ! . . .
There is a bench. Come, wilt thou
sit ? . . . My bank

Of wild-flowers. [*He sits.*] At thy feet !
[*She sits at his feet.*]

Henry. I bade them clear
A royal pleasaunce for thee, in the
wood,

Not leave these countryfolk at court.
Rosamund. I brought them
In from the wood, and set them here.

I love them
More than the garden flowers, that
seem at most

Sweet guests, or foreign cousins, not
half speaking

The language of the land. I love
them too,

Yes. But, my liege, I am sure, of all
the roses —

Shame fall on those who gave it a
dog's name —

This wild one (*picking a briar-rose*) —
nay, I shall not prick myself —

Is sweetest. Do but smell!

Henry. Thou rose of the world!
Thou rose of all the roses!

[*Muttering.*
I am not worthy of her — this beast-
body

That God has plunged my soul in — I,
that taking

The Fiend's advantage of a throne, so
long

Have wander'd among women, — a
foul stream

Thro' fever-breeding levels, — at her
side,

Among these happy dales, run clearer,
drop

The mud I carried, like yon brook, and
glass

The faithful face of heaven —
[*Looking at her and unconsciously aloud.*

— Thine! thine!

Rosamund. I know it.

Henry (*muttering*). Not hers. We
have but one bond, her hate of
Becket.

Rosamund (*half hearing*). Nay! nay!
what art thou muttering? I
hate Becket?

Henry (*muttering*). A sane and
natural loathing for a soul
Purer, and truer and nobler than her-
self;

And mine a bitterer illegitimate
hate,

A bastard hate born of a former
love.

Rosamund. My fault to name him!
O let the hand of one

To whom thy voice is all her music,
stay it

But for a breath.

[*Puts her hand before his lips.*

Speak only of thy love.

Why there — like some loud beggar
at thy gate —

The happy boldness of this hand hath
won it

Love's alms, thy kiss (*looking at her
hand*) — Sacred! I'll kiss it
too. [*Kissing it.*

There! wherefore dost thou so peruse
it? Nay,

There may be crosses in my line of
life.

Henry. Not half *her* hand — no hand
to mate with *her*,

If it should come to that.

Rosamund. With *her*? with whom?

Henry. Life on the hand is naked
gipsy-stuff;

Life on the face, the brows — clear
innocence!

Vein'd marble — not a furrow yet —
and hers [*Muttering.*

Croost and recroost, a venomous spider's
web —

Rosamund (*springing up*). Out of the
cloud, my Sun — out of the
eclipse

Narrowing my golden hour!

Henry. O Rosamund,

I would be true — would tell thee all
— and something

I had to say — I love thee none the
less —

Which will so vex thee.

Rosamund. Something against *me*?

Henry. No, no, against myself.

Rosamund. I will not hear it.

Come, come, mine hour! I bargain
for mine hour.

I'll call thee little Geoffrey.

Henry. Call him!

Rosamund. Geoffrey!

Enter GEOFFREY.

Henry. How the boy grows!

Rosamund. Ay, and his brows are
thine;

The mouth is only Clifford, my dear
father.

Geoffrey. My liege, what hast thou
brought me?

Henry. Venal imp!

What say'st thou to the Chancellor-
ship of England?

Geoffrey. O yes, my liege.

Henry. "O yes, my liege!" He
speaks

As if it were a cake of gingerbread.

Dost thou know, my boy, what it is
to be Chancellor of England?

Geoffrey. Something good, or thou
wouldest not give it me.

Henry. It is, my boy, to side with
the King when Chancellor, and then
to be made Archbishop and go against
the King who made him, and turn the
world upside down.

Geoffrey. I won't have it then.
Nay, but give it me, and I promise
thee not to turn the world upside down.

Henry (giving him a ball). Here is a ball, my boy, thy world, to turn anyway and play with as thou wilt — which is more than I can do with mine. Go try it, play. [*Exit Geoffrey.*]

A pretty lusty boy.

Rosamund. So like to thee ;
Like to be liker.

Henry. Not in my chin, I hope !
That threatens double.

Rosamund. Thou art manlike perfect.

Henry. Ay, ay, no doubt ; and were I humpt behind,
Thou'd say as much — the goodly way of women
Who love, for which I love them.
May God grant
No ill befall or him or thee when I Am gone.

Rosamund. Is he thy enemy ?

Henry. He ? who ? ay !

Rosamund. Thine enemy knows the secret of my bower.

Henry. And I could tear him asunder with wild horses
Before he would betray it. Nay — no fear !
More like is he to excommunicate me.

Rosamund. And I would creep, crawl over knife-edge flint
Barefoot, a hundred leagues, to stay his hand
Before he flash'd the bolt.

Henry. And when he flash'd it Shrink from me, like a daughter of the Church.

Rosamund. Ay, but he will not.

Henry. Ay ! but if he did ?

Rosamund. O then ! O then ! I almost fear to say
That my poor heretic heart would excommunicate
His excommunication, clinging to thee
Closer than ever.

Henry (raising *Rosamund* and kissing her). My brave-hearted Rose !

Hath he ever been to see thee ?

Rosamund. Here ? not he.
And it is so lonely here — no confessor.

Henry. Thou shalt confess all thy sweet sins to me.

Rosamund. Besides, we came away in such a heat,
I brought not ev'n my crucifix.

Henry. Take this.

[*Giving her the Crucifix which Eleanor gave him.*]

Rosamund. O beautiful ! May I have it as mine, till mine
Be mine again ?

Henry (throwing it round her neck). Thine — as I am — till death !

Rosamund. Death ? no ! I'll have it with me in my shroud,
And wake with it, and show it to all the Saints.

Henry. Nay — I must go ; but when thou layest thy lip
To this, remembering One who died for thee,
Remember also one who lives for thee
Out there in France ; for I must hence to brave
The Pope, King Louis, and this turbulent priest.

Rosamund (kneeling). O by thy love for me, all mine for thee,
Fling not thy soul into the flames of hell :

I kneel to thee — be friends with him again.

Henry. Look, look ! if little Geoffrey have not tost
His ball into the brook ! makes after it too

To find it. Why, the child will drown himself.

Rosamund. Geoffrey ! Geoffrey !
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — MONTMIRAIL. "THE MEETING OF THE KINGS." JOHN OF OXFORD AND HENRY. CROWD IN THE DISTANCE.

John of Oxford. You have not crown'd young Henry yet, my liege ?

Henry. Crown'd ! by God's eyes, we will not have him crown'd.
I spoke of late to the boy, he answer'd me,
As if he wore the crown already — No,

We will not have him crown'd.
'Tis true what Becket told me, that the mother

Would make him play his kingship against mine.

John of Oxford. Not have him crown'd ?

Henry. Not now — not yet ! and Becket —
Becket should crown him were he crown'd at all :

But, since we would be lord of our own manor,
This Canterbury, like a wounded deer,
Has fled our presence and our feeding-grounds.

John of Oxford. Cannot a smooth tongue lick him whole again
To serve your will ?

Henry. He hates my will, not me.

John of Oxford. There's York, my liege.

Henry. But England scarce would hold

Young Henry king, if only crown'd
by York,
And that would stilt up York to twice
himself.
There is a movement yonder in the
crowd —
See if our pious — what shall I call
him, John? —
Husband-in-law, our smooth-shorn
suzerain,
Be yet within the field.
John of Oxford. I will. [*Exit.*
Henry. Ay! Ay!
Mince and go back! his politic Holi-
ness
Hath all but climb'd the Roman perch
again,
And we shall hear him presently with
clapt wing
Crow over Barbarossa — at last
tongue-free
To blast my realms with excommuni-
cation
And interdict. I must patch up a
peace —
A piece in this long-tugged at, thread-
bare worn
Quarrel of Crown and Church — to
rend again.
His Holiness cannot steer straight
thro' shoals,
Nor I. The citizen's heir hath con-
quer'd me
For the moment. So we make our
peace with him.

Enter LOUIS.

Brother of France, what shall be done
with Becket?
Louis. The holy Thomas! Brother,
you have traffick'd
Between the Emperor and the Pope,
between
The Pope and Antipope — a perilous
game
For men to play with God.
Henry. Ay, ay, good brother,
They call you the Monk-King.
Louis. Who calls me? she
That was my wife, now yours? You
have her Duchy,
The point you aim'd at, and pray
God she prove
True wife to you. You have had the
better of us
In secular matters.
Henry. Come, confess, good brother,
You did your best or worst to keep
her Duchy.
Only the golden Leopard printed in it
Such hold-fast claws that you per-
force again
Shrank into France. Tut, tut! did
we convene
This conference but to babble of our
wives?

They are plagues enough in-door.
Louis. We fought in the East,
And felt the sun of Antioch scald our
mail,
And push'd our lances into Saracen
hearts.
We never hounded on the State at
home
To spoil the Church.
Henry. How should you see this
rightly?
Louis. Well, well, no more! I am
proud of my "Monk-King,"
Whoever named me; and, brother,
Holy Church
May rock, but will not wreck, nor our
Archbishop
Stagger on the slope decks for any
rough sea
Blown by the breath of kings. We
do forgive you
For aught you wrought against us.
[*Henry holds up his hand.*
Nay, I pray you,
Do not defend yourself. You will do
much
To rake out old dying heats, if
you,
At my requesting, will but look into
The wrongs you did him, and restore
his kin,
Reseat him on his throne of Canter-
bury,
Be, both, the friends you were.
Henry. The friends we were!
Co-mates we were, and had our sport
together,
Co-kings we were, and made the laws
together.
The world had never seen the like
before.
You are too cold to know the fashion
of it.
Well, well, we will be gentle with
him, gracious —
Most gracious.

Enter BECKET, after him, JOHN OF OXFORD, ROGER OF YORK, GILBERT FOLIOU, DE BROU, FITZURSE, etc.

Only that the rift he made
May close between us, here I am
wholly king,
The word should come from him.
Becket (kneeling). Then, my dear
liege,
I here deliver all this controversy
Into your royal hands.
Henry. Ah, Thomas, Thomas,
Thou art thyself again, Thomas again.
Becket (rising). Saving God's honor!
Henry. Out upon thee, man!
Saving the Devil's honor, his yes and
no.

Knights, bishops, earls, this London
 spawn — by Mahound,
 I had sooner have been born a Mus-
 sulman —
 Less clashing with their priests —
 I am half-way down the slope — will
 no man stay me ?
 I dash myself to pieces — I stay my-
 self —
 Puff — it is gone. You, Master
 Becket, you
 That owe to me your power over me —
 Nay, nay —
 Brother of France, you have taken,
 cherish'd him
 Who thief-like fled from his own
 church by night,
 No man pursuing. I would have had
 him back.
 Take heed he do not turn and rend
 you too :
 For whatsoever may displease him —
 that
 Is clean against God's honor — a shift,
 a trick
 Whereby to challenge, face me out of
 all
 My regal rights. Yet, yet — that
 none may dream
 I go against God's honor — ay, or him-
 self
 In any reason, choose
 A hundred of the wisest heads from
 England,
 A hundred, too, from Normandy and
 Anjou :
 Let these decide on what was cus-
 tomary
 In olden days, and all the Church of
 France
 Decide on their decision, I am con-
 tent.
 More, what the mightiest and the
 holiest
 Of all his predecessors may have done
 Ev'n to the least and meanest of my
 own,
 Let him do the same to me — I am
 content.

Louis. Ay, ay ! the King humbles
 himself enough.

Becket (aside). Words ! he will
 wriggle out of them like an eel
 When the time serves. (*Aloud.*) My
 lieges and my lords,
 The thanks of Holy Church are due
 to those
 That went before us for their work,
 which we
 Inheriting reap an easier harvest.
 Yet —

Louis. My lord, will you be greater
 than the Saints,
 More than St. Peter ? whom —
 what is it you doubt ?
 Behold your peace at hand.

Becket. I say that those
 Who went before us did not wholly
 clear
 The deadly growths of earth, which
 Hell's own heat
 So dwelt on that they rose and dark-
 en'd Heaven.
 Yet they did much. Would God they
 had torn up all
 By the hard root, which shoots again ;
 our trial
 Had so been less ; but, seeing they
 were men
 Defective or excessive, must we fol-
 low
 All that they overdid or underdid ?
 Nay, if they were defective as St.
 Peter
 Denying Christ, who yet defied the
 tyrant,
 We hold by his defiance, not his de-
 fect.

O good son Louis, do not counsel
 me,
 No, to suppress God's honor for the
 sake
 Of any king that breathes. No, God
 forbid !

Henry. No ! God forbid ! and turn
 me Mussulman !
 No God but one, and Mahound is his
 prophet.
 But for your Christian, look you, you
 shall have
 None other God but me — me, Thomas,
 son
 Of Gilbert Becket, London merchant.
 Out !

I hear no more. [*Exit.*
Louis. Our brother's anger puts
 him,
 Poor man, beside himself — not wise.
 My lord,
 We have claspt your cause, believing
 that our brother
 Had wrong'd you ; but this day he
 proffer'd peace.
 You will have war ; and tho' we grant
 the Church
 King' over this world's kings, yet, my
 good lord,
 We that are kings are something in
 this world,
 And so we pray you, draw yourself
 from under
 The wings of France. We shelter
 you no more. [*Exit.*

John of Oxford. I am glad that
 France hath scouted him at
 last :
 I told the Pope what manner of man
 he was. [*Exit.*
Roger of York. Yea, since he flouts
 the will of either realm,
 Let either cast him away like a dead
 dog ! [*Exit.*

Foliot. Yea, let a stranger spoil his heritage,
And let another take his bishoprick!
[*Exit.*]

De Broc. Our castle, my lord, belongs to Canterbury.

I pray you come and take it. [*Exit.*]

Fitzurse. When you will. [*Exit.*]

Becket. Cursed be John of Oxford,
Roger of York,
And Gilbert Foliot! cursed those De Broes

That hold our Saltwood Castle from our see!

Cursed Fitzurse, and all the rest of them

That sow this hate between my lord and me!

Voices from the Crowd. Blessed be the Lord Archbishop, who hath withstood two Kings to their faces for the honor of God.

Becket. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, praise!

I thank you, sons; when kings but hold by crowns,

The crowd that hungers for a crown in Heaven

Is my true king.

Herbert. Thy true King bade thee be A fisher of men; thou hast them in thy net.

Becket. I am too like the King here; both of us

Too headlong for our office. Better have been

A fisherman at Bosham, my good Herbert,

Thy birthplace — the sea-creek — the petty rill

That falls into it — the green field — the gray church —

The simple lobster-basket, and the mesh —

The more or less of daily labor done — The pretty gaping bills in the home-nest

Piping for bread — the daily want supplied —

The daily pleasure to supply it.

Herbert. Ah, Thomas, You had not borne it, no, not for a day.

Becket. Well, maybe, no.

Herbert. But bear with Walter Map, For here he comes to comment on the time.

Enter WALTER MAP.

Walter Map. Pity, my lord, that you have quenched the warmth of France toward you, tho' His Holiness, after much smouldering and smoking, be kindled again upon your quarter.

Becket. Ay, if he do not end in smoke again.

Walter Map. My lord, the fire, when first kindled, said to the smoke, "Go up, my son, straight to Heaven." And the smoke said, "I go"; but anon the North-east took and turned him South-west, then the South-west turned him North-east, and so of the other winds; but it was in him to go up straight if the time had been quieter. Your lordship affects the unwavering perpendicular; but His Holiness, pushed one way by the Empire and another by England, if he move at all, Heaven stay him, is fain to diagonalize.

Herbert. Diagonalize! thou art a word-monger!

Our Thomas never will diagonalize. Thou art a jester and a verse-maker. Diagonalize!

Walter Map. Is the world any the worse for my verses if the Latin rhymes be rolled out from a full mouth? or any harm done to the people if my jest be in defence of the Truth?

Becket. Ay, if the jest be so done that the people

Delight to wallow in the grossness of it, Till Truth herself be shamed of her defender.

Non defensoribus istis, Walter Map.

Walter Map. Is that my case? so if the city be sick, and I cannot call the kennel-sweet, your lordship would suspend me from verse-writing, as you suspended yourself after sub-writing to the customs.

Becket. I pray God pardon mine infirmity.

Walter Map. Nay, my lord, take heart; for tho' you suspended yourself, the Pope let you down again; and tho' you suspend Foliot or another, the Pope will not leave them in suspense, for the Pope himself is always in suspense, like Mahound's coffin hung between heaven and earth — always in suspense, like the scales, till the weight of Germany or the gold of England brings one of them down to the dust — always in suspense, like the tail of the horologe — to and fro — tick-tack — we make the time, we keep the time, ay, and we serve the time; for I have heard say that if you boxed the Pope's ears with a purse, you might stagger him, but he would pocket the purse. No saying of mine — Jocelyn of Salisbury. But the King hath bought half the College of Redhats. He warmed to you to-day, and you have chilled him again. Yet you both love God. Agree with him quickly again, even for the sake of the Church. My one grain of good counsel which you will

not swallow. I hate a split between old friendships as I hate the dirty gap in the face of a Cistercian monk, that will swallow anything. Farewell.

[Exit.

Becket. Map scoffs at Rome. I all but hold with Map.
Save for myself no Rome were left in England,
All had been his. Why should this Rome, this Rome,
Still choose Barabbas rather than the Christ,
Absolve the left-hand thief and damn the right?
Take fees of tyranny, wink at sacrilege,
Which even Peter had not dared? condemn
The blameless exile? —

Herbert. Thee, thou holy Thomas! I would that thou hadst been the Holy Father.

Becket. I would have done my most to keep Rome holy,
I would have made Rome know she still is Rome —
Who stands aghast at her eternal self
And shakes at mortal kings — her vacillation,
Avarice, craft — O God, how many an innocent
Has left his bones upon the way to Rome
Unwept, uncared for. Yea — on mine own self
The King had had no power except for Rome.

'Tis not the King who is guilty of mine exile,
But Rome, Rome, Rome!

Herbert. My lord, I see this Louis Returning, ah! to drive thee from his realm.

Becket. He said as much before. Thou art no prophet.
Nor yet a prophet's son.

Herbert. Whatever he say, Deny not thou God's honor for a king.
The King looks troubled.

Re-enter KING LOUIS.

Louis. My dear lord Archbishop, I learn but now that those poor Poitevins,
That in thy cause were stirr'd against King Henry,
Have been, despite his kingly promise given
To our own self of pardon, evilly used
And put to pain. I have lost all trust in him.
The Church alone hath eyes — and now I see
That I was blind — suffer the phrase — surrendering

God's honor to the pleasure of a man. Forgive me and absolve me, holy father. [Kneels.

Becket. Son, I absolve thee in the name of God.

Louis (rising). Return to Sens, where we will care for you.

The wine and wealth of all our France are yours;

Rest in our realm, and be at peace with all. [Exeunt.

Voices from the Crowd. Long live the good King Louis! God bless the great Archbishop!

Re-enter HENRY and JOHN OF OXFORD.

Henry (looking after King Louis and Becket). Ay, there they go — both backs are turn'd to me — Why then I strike into my former path

For England, crown young Henry there, and make

Our waning Eleanor all but love me! John,

Thou hast served me heretofore with Rome — and well.

They call thee John the Swearer.

John of Oxford. For this reason, That, being ever duteous to the King, I evermore have sworn upon his side, And ever mean to do it.

Henry (claps him on shoulder). Honest John!

To Rome again! the storm begins again.

Spare not thy tongue! be lavish with our coins,

Threaten our junction with the Emperor — flatter

And fright the Pope — bribe all the Cardinals — leave

Lateran and Vatican in one dust of gold —

Swear and unswear, state and misstate thy best!

I go to have young Henry crown'd by York.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE BOWER.

HENRY and ROSAMUND.

Henry. All that you say is just. I cannot answer it
Till better times, when I shall put away —

Rosamund. What will you put away?

Henry. That which you ask me
Till better times. Let it content you now

There is no woman that I love so well.

Rosamund. No woman but should be content with that —

Henry. And one fair child to fondle!

Rosamund. O yes, the child we waited for so long — heaven's gift at last —

And how you doated on him then! To-day

I almost fear'd your kiss was colder — yes —

But then the child is such a child. What chance

That he should ever spread into the man

Here in our silence? I have done my best.

I am not learn'd.

Henry. I am the King, his father, And I will look to it. Is our secret ours?

Have you had any alarm? no stranger?

Rosamund. No. The warder of the bower hath given himself

Of late to wine. I sometimes think he sleeps

When he should watch; and yet what fear? the people

Believe the wood enchanted. No one comes,

Nor foe nor friend; his fond excess of wine

Springs from the loneliness of my poor bower,

Which weighs even on me.

Henry. Yet these tree-towers, Their long bird-echoing minster-aisles, — the voice

Of the perpetual brook, these golden slopes

Of Solomon-shaming flowers — that was your saying,

All pleased you so at first.

Rosamund. Not now so much. My Anjou bower was scarce as beautiful.

But you were oftener there. I have none but you.

The brook's voice is not yours, and no flower, not

The sun himself, should he be changed to one,

Could shine away the darkness of that gap

Left by the lack of love.

Henry. The lack of love!

Rosamund. Of one we love. Nay,

I would not be bold,

Yet hoped ere this you might —

[Looks earnestly at him.]

Henry. Anything further?

Rosamund. Only my best bower-maiden died of late,

And that old priest whom John of Salisbury trusted

Hath sent another.

Henry. Secret?

Rosamund. I but ask'd her One question, and she primm'd her mouth and put

Her hands together — thus — and said, God help her,

That she was sworn to silence.

Henry. What did you ask her?

Rosamund. Some daily something — nothing.

Henry. Secret, then?

Rosamund. I do not love her. Must you go, my liege,

So suddenly?

Henry. I came to England suddenly, And on a great occasion sure to wake

As great a wrath in Becket —

Rosamund. Always Becket! He always comes between us.

Henry. — And to meet it I needs must leave as suddenly. It is raining,

Put on your hood and see me to the bounds. [Exeunt.]

Margery (singing behind scene).

Babble in bower

Under the rose!

Bee mustn't buzz,

Whoop — but he knows.

Kiss me, little one,

Nobody near!

Grasshopper, grasshopper,

Whoop — you can hear.

Kiss in the bower,

Tit on the tree!

Bird mustn't tell,

Whoop — he can see.

Enter MARGERY.

I ha' been but a week here and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, for to be sure it's no more than a week since our old Father Philip that has confessed our mother for twenty years, and she was hard put to it, and to speak truth, nigh at the end of our last crust, and that mouldy, and she cried out to him to put me forth in the world and to make me a woman of the world, and to win my own bread, whereupon he asked our mother if I could keep a quiet tongue i' my head, and not speak till I was spoke to, and I answered for myself that I never spoke more than was needed, and he told me he would advance me to the service of a great lady, and took me ever so far away, and gave me a great pat o' the cheek for a pretty wench, and said it was a

pity to blindfold such eyes as mine, and such to be sure they be, but he blinded 'em for all that, and so brought me no-hows as I may say, and the more shame to him after his promise, into a garden and not into the world, and bade me whatever I saw not to speak one word, an' it 'ud be well for me in the end, for there were great ones who would look after me, and to be sure I ha' seen great ones to-day — and then not to speak one word, for that's the rule o' the garden, tho' to be sure if I had been Eve i' the garden I shouldn't ha' minded the apple, for what's an apple, you know, save to a child, and I'm no child, but more a woman o' the world than my lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen — tho' to be sure if I hadn't minded it we should all on us ha' had to go, bless the Saints, wi' bare backs, but the backs 'ud ha' countenanced one another, and belike it 'ud ha' been always summer, and anyhow I am as well-shaped as my lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, and what's the good of my talking to myself, for here comes my lady (*enter ROSAMUND*), and, my lady, tho' I shouldn't speak one word, I wish you joy o' the King's brother.

Rosamund. What is it you mean?

Margery. I mean your goodman, your husband, my lady, for I saw your ladyship a-parting wi' him even now i' the coppice, when I was a-getting o' bluebells for your ladyship's nose to smell on — and I ha' seen the King once at Oxford, and he's as like the King as fingernail to fingernail, and I thought at first it was the King, only you know the King's married, for King Louis —

Rosamund. Married!

Margery. Years and years, my lady, for her husband, King Louis —

Rosamund. Hush!

Margery. — And I thought if it were the King's brother he had a better bride than the King, for the people do say that his is bad beyond all reckoning, and —

Rosamund. The people lie.

Margery. Very like, my lady, but most on 'em know an honest woman and a lady when they see her, and besides they say, she makes songs, and that's against her, for I never knew an honest woman that could make songs, tho' to be sure our mother 'ill sing me old songs by the hour, but then, God help her, she had 'em from her mother, and her mother from her mother back and back for ever so long, but none on 'em ever made songs, and they were all honest.

Rosamund. Go, you shall tell me of her some other time.

Margery. There's none so much to tell on her, my lady, only she kept the seventh commandment better than some I know on, or I couldn't look your ladyship i' the face, and she brew'd the best ale in all Glo'ster, that is to say in her time when she had the "Crown."

Rosamund. The crown! who?

Margery. Mother.

Rosamund. I mean her whom you call — fancy — my husband's brother's wife.

Margery. Oh, Queen Eleanor. Yes, my lady; and tho' I be sworn not to speak a word, I can tell you all about her, if —

Rosamund. No word now. I am faint and sleepy. Leave me.

Nay — go. What! will you anger me.

[*Exit Margery.*]

He charged me not to question any of those

About me. Have I? no! she question'd me.

Did she not slander him? Should she stay here?

May she not tempt me, being at my side,

To question her? Nay, can I send her hence

Without his kingly leave! I am in the dark.

I have lived, poor bird, from cage to cage, and known

Nothing but him — happy to know no more,

So that he loved me — and he loves me — yes,

And bound me by his love to secrecy Till his own time.

Eleanor, Eleanor, have I Not heard ill things of her in France?

Oh, she's

The Queen of France. I see it — some confusion,

Some strange mistake. I did not hear aright,

Myself confused with parting from the King.

Margery (behind scene).

Bee mustn't buzz,

Whoop — but he knows.

Rosamund. Yet her — what her? he hinted of some her —

When he was here before — Something that would displease me.

Hath he stray'd

From love's clear path into the common bush,

And, being scratch'd, returns to his true rose,

Who hath not thorn enough to prick him for it,

Ev'n with a word?

Margery (behind scene).

Bird mustn't tell,

Whoop — he can see.

Rosamund. I would not hear him.

Nay — there's more — he frown'd
"No mate for her, if it should come
to that" —

To that — to what?

Margery (behind scene).

Whoop — but he knows,

Whoop — but he knows.

Rosamund. O God! some dreadful
truth is breaking on me —
Some dreadful thing is coming on me.

Enter GEOFFREY.

Geoffrey!

Geoffrey. What are you crying for,
when the sun shines?

Rosamund. Hath not thy father left
us to ourselves?

Geoffrey. Ay, but he's taken the
rain with him. I hear Margery:
I'll go play with her.

[Exit Geoffrey.]

Rosamund. Rainbow, stay,
Gleam upon gloom,
Bright as my dream,
Rainbow, stay!
But it passes away,
Gloom upon gleam,
Dark as my doom —
O rainbow, stay.

SCENE II. — OUTSIDE THE WOODS
NEAR ROSAMUND'S BOWER.

ELEANOR. FITZURSE.

Eleanor. Up from the salt lips of
the land we two
Have track'd the King to this dark
inland wood;
And somewhere hereabouts he van-
ish'd. Here
His turtle builds: his exit is our
adit:
Watch! he will out again, and pres-
ently,
Seeing he must to Westminster and
crown
Young Henry there to-morrow.
Fitzurse. We have watch'd
So long in vain, he hath pass'd out
again,
And on the other side.

[A great horn winded.]

Hark! Madam!

Eleanor. Ah,
How ghostly sounds that horn in the
back wood!

[A countryman flying.]

Whither away, man? what are you
flying from?

Countryman. The witch! the witch!
she sits naked by a great heap of

gold in the middle of the wood, and
when the horn sounds she comes out
as a wolf. Get you hence! a man
passed in there to-day: I holla'd to
him, but he didn't hear me: he'll
never out again, the witch has got
him. I daren't stay — I daren't stay!

Eleanor. Kind of the witch to give
thee warning tho'. *[Man flies.]*
Is not this wood-witch of the rustic's
fear

Our woodland Circe that hath witch'd
the King?

[Horn sounded. Another flying.]

Fitzurse. Again! stay, fool, and tell
me why thou fliest.

Countryman. Fly thou too. The
King keeps his forest head of game
here, and when that horn sounds, a
score of wolf-dogs are let loose that
will tear thee piecemeal. Linger not
till the third horn. Fly! *[Exit.]*

Eleanor. This is the likelier tale.

We have hit the place.

Now let the King's fine game look to
itself. *[Horn.]*

Fitzurse. Again! —

And far on in the dark heart of the
wood

I hear the yelping of the hounds of
hell.

Eleanor. I have my dagger here to
still their throats.

Fitzurse. Nay, Madam, not to-night
— the night is falling.

What can be done to-night?

Eleanor. Well — well — away.

SCENE III. — TRAITOR'S MEADOW
AT FRÉTEVAL. PAVILIONS AND
TENTS OF THE ENGLISH AND
FRENCH BARONAGE.

BECKET and HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

Becket. See here!

Herbert. What's here?

Becket. A notice from the priest,
To whom our John of Salisbury com-
mitted

The secret of the bower, that our
wolf-Queen

Is prowling round the fold. I should
be back

In England ev'n for this.

Herbert. These are by-things
In the great cause.

Becket. The by-things of the Lord
Are the wrong'd innocences that will
cry

From all the hidden by-ways of the
world

In the great day against the wronger.
I know

Thy meaning. Perish she, I, all, be-
fore

The Church should suffer wrong!

Herbert. Do you see, my lord,
There is the King talking with Wal-
ter Map?

Becket. He hath the Pope's last let-
ters, and they threaten
The immediate thunder-blast of inter-
dict:

Yet he can scarce be touching upon
those,

Or scarce would smile that fashion.

Herbert. Winter sunshine!
Beware of opening out thy bosom to it,
Lest thou, myself, and all thy flock
should catch

An after-ague-fit of trembling. Look!
He bows, he bares his head, he is
coming hither,
Still with a smile.

*Enter KING HENRY and WALTER
MAP.*

Henry. We have had so many hours
together, Thomas,
So many happy hours alone together,
That I would speak with you once
more alone.

Becket. My liege, your will and
happiness are mine.

[*Exeunt King and Becket.*

Herbert. The same smile still.

Walter Map. Do you see that great
black cloud that hath come over the
sun and cast us all into shadow?

Herbert. And feel it too.

Walter Map. And see you yon side-
beam that is forced from under it,
and sets the church-tower over there
all a-hell-fire as it were?

Herbert. Ay.

Walter Map. It is this black, bell-
silencing, anti-marrying, burial-hin-
dering interdict that hath squeezed
out this side-smile upon Canterbury,
whereof may come conflagration.
Were I Thomas, I wouldn't trust it.
Sudden change is a house on sand;
and tho' I count Henry honest enough,
yet when fear creeps in at the front,
honesty steals out at the back, and
the King at last is fairly scared by
ly this cloud—this interdict. I have
been more for the King than the
Church in this matter—yea, even for
the sake of the Church: for, truly, as
the case stood, you had safelier have
slain an archbishop than a she-goat:
but our recoverer and upholder of cus-
toms hath in this crowning of young
Henry by York and London so violated
the immemorial usage of the Church,
that, like the gravedigger's child I have
heard of, trying to ring the bell, he
hath half-hanged himself in the rope
of the Church, or rather pulled all

the Church with the Holy Father
astride of it down upon his own head.

Herbert. Were you there?

Walter Map. In the church rope?
—no. I was at the crowning, for I
have pleasure in the pleasure of
crowds, and to read the faces of men
at a great show.

Herbert. And how did Roger of
York comport himself?

Walter Map. As magnificently and
archiepiscopally as our Thomas would
have done: only there was a dare-
devil in his eye—I should say a dare-
Becket. He thought less of two
kings than of one Roger the king of
the occasion. Foliot is the holier
man, perhaps the better. Once or
twice there ran a twitch across his
face as who should say what's to fol-
low? but Salisbury was a calf cowed
by Mother Church, and every now
and then glancing about him like a
thief at night when he hears a door
open in the house and thinks "the
master."

Herbert. And the father-king?

Walter Map. The father's eye was
so tender it would have called a goose
off the green, and once he strove to
hide his face, like the Greek king
when his daughter was sacrificed, but
he thought better of it: it was but
the sacrifice of a kingdom to his son,
a smaller matter; but as to the young
crowning himself, he looked so mala-
pert in the eyes, that had I fathered
him I had given him more of the rod
than the sceptre. Then followed the
thunder of the captains and the shout-
ing, and so we came on to the ban-
quet, from whence there puffed out
such an incense of unctuousity into
the nostrils of our Gods of Church
and State, that Lucullus or Apicius
might have sniffed it in their Hades
of heathenism, so that the smell of
their own roast had not come across
it—

Herbert. Map, tho' you make your
butt too big, you overshoot it.

Walter Map.—For as to the fish,
they de-miracled the miraculous
draught, and might have sunk a
navy—

Herbert. There again, Goliassing and
Goliathising!

Walter Map.—And as for the flesh
at table, a whole Peter's sheet, with all
manner of game, and four-footed
things, and fowls—

Herbert. And all manner of creep-
ing things too?

Walter Map.—Well, there were
Abbots—but they did not bring their
women; and so we were dull enough

at first, but in the end we flourished out into a merriment; for the old King would act servitor and hand a dish to his son; whereupon my Lord of York — his fine-cut face bowing and beaming with all that courtesy which hath less loyalty in it than the backward scrape of the clown's heel — "great honor," says he, "from the King's self to the King's son." Did you hear the young King's quip?

Herbert. No, what was it?

Walter Map. Glancing at the days when his father was only Earl of Anjou, he answered: — "Should not an earl's son wait on a king's son?" And when the cold corners of the King's mouth began to thaw, there was a great motion of laughter among us, part real, part childlike, to be freed from the dulness — part royal, for King and kingling both laughed, and so we could not but laugh, as by a royal necessity — part childlike again — when we felt we had laughed too long and could not stay ourselves — many midriff-shaken even to tears, as springs gush out after earthquakes — but from those, as I said before, there may come a conflagration — tho', to keep the figure moist and make it hold water, I should say rather, the larymation of a lamentation; but look if Thomas have not flung himself at the King's feet. They have made it up again — for the moment.

Herbert. Thanks to the blessed Magdalen, whose day it is.

Re-enter HENRY and BECKET. (During their conference the Barons and Bishops of France and England come in at back of stage.)

Becket. Ay, King! for in thy kingdom, as thou knowest,
The spouse of the Great King, thy King, hath fallen —
The daughter of Zion lies beside the way —
The priests of Baal tread her underfoot —
The golden ornaments are stolen from her —

Henry. Have I not promised to restore her, Thomas,
And send thee back again to Canterbury?

Becket. Send back again those exiles of my kin
Who wander famine-wasted thro' the world.

Henry. Have I not promised, man, to send them back?

Becket. Yet one thing more. Thou hast broken thro' the pales

Of privilege, crowning thy young son by York,
London and Salisbury — not Canterbury.

Henry. York crown'd the Conqueror — not Canterbury.

Becket. There was no Canterbury in William's time.

Henry. But Hereford, you know, crown'd the first Henry.

Becket. But Anselm crown'd this Henry o'er again.

Henry. And thou shalt crown my Henry o'er again.

Becket. And is it then with thy goodwill that I

Proceed against thine evil councillors,
And hurl the dread ban of the Church on those

Who made the second mitre play the first,
And acted me?

Henry. Well, well, then — have thy way!

It may be they were evil councillors.
What more, my lord Archbishop?
What more, Thomas?

I make thee full amends. Say all thy say,

But blaze not out before the Frenchmen here.

Becket. More? Nothing, so thy promise be thy deed.

Henry (holding out his hand). Give me thy hand. My Lords of France and England,

My friend of Canterbury and myself
Are now once more at perfect amity.
Unkingly should I be, and most un-

knighly,
Not striving still, however much in vain,

To rival him in Christian charity.

Herbert. All praise to Heaven, and sweet St. Magdalen!

Henry. And so farewell until we meet in England.

Becket. I fear, my liege, we may not meet in England.

Henry. How, do you make me a traitor?

Becket. No, indeed!
That be far from thee.

Henry. Come, stay with us, then,
Before you part for England.

Becket. I am bound
For that one hour to stay with good King Louis,
Who helpt me when none else.

Herbert. He said thy life
Was not one hour's worth in England save

King Henry gave thee first the kiss of peace.

Henry. He said so? Louis, did he? look you, Herbert.

When I was in mine anger with King
 Louis,
 I swear I would not give the kiss of
 peace,
 Not on French ground, nor any ground
 but English,
 Where his cathedral stands. Mine
 old friend, Thomas,
 I would there were that perfect trust
 between us,
 That health of heart, once ours, ere
 Pope or King
 Had come between us! Even now —
 who knows? —
 I might deliver all things to thy hand —
 If . . . but I say no more . . . fare-
 well, my lord.

Becket. Farewell, my liege!

[*Exit Henry, then the Barons and Bishops.*]

Walter Map. There again! when the
 full fruit of the royal promise might
 have dropt into thy mouth hadst thou
 but opened it to thank him.

Becket. He fenced his royal promise
 with an *if*.

Walter Map. And is the King's *if* too
 high a stile for your lordship to over-
 step and come at all things in the next
 field?

Becket. Ay, if this *if* be like the
 Devil's "*if*"

Thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Herbert. Oh, Thomas,
 I could fall down and worship thee,
 my Thomas,
 For thou hast trodden this wine-press
 alone.

Becket. Nay, of the people there are
 many with me.

Walter Map. I am not altogether
 with you, my lord, tho' I am none of
 those that would raise a storm between
 you, lest ye should draw together like
 two ships in a calm. You wrong the
 King: he meant what he said to-day.
 Who shall vouch for his to-morrows?
 One word further. Doth not the *few-
 ness* of anything make the fulness of
 it in estimation? Is not virtue prized
 mainly for its rarity and great base-
 ness loathed as an exception: for were
 all, my lord, as noble as yourself, who
 would look up to you? and were all
 as base as — who shall I say — Fitzurse
 and his following — who would look
 down upon them? My lord, you have
 put so many of the King's household
 out of communion, that they begin to
 smile at it.

Becket. At their peril, at their
 peril —

Walter Map. — For tho' the drop
 may hollow out the dead stone, doth
 not the living skin thicken against
 perpetual whippings? This is the

second grain of good counsel I ever
 proffered thee, and so cannot suffer
 by the rule of frequency. Have I
 sown it in salt? I trust not, for be-
 fore God I promise you the King
 hath many more wolves than he can
 tame in his woods of England, and if
 it suit their purpose to howl for the
 King, and you still move against him,
 you may have no less than to die for
 it; but God and his free wind grant
 your lordship a happy home-return
 and the King's kiss of peace in Kent.
 Farewell! I must follow the King.

[*Exit.*]

Herbert. Ay, and I warrant the
 customs. Did the King
 Speak of the customs?

Becket. No! — to die for it —
 I live to die for it, I die to live for it.
 The State will die, the Church can
 never die.

The King's not like to die for that
 which dies;

But I must die for that which never
 dies.

It will be so — my visions in the
 Lord:

It must be so, my friend! the wolves
 of England

Must murder her one shepherd, that
 the sheep

May feed in peace. False figure, Map
 would say.

Earth's falses are heaven's truths.
 And when my voice

Is martyr'd mute, and this man dis-
 appears,

That perfect trust may come again
 between us,

And there, there, there, not here I
 shall rejoice

To find my stray sheep back within
 the fold.

The crowd are scattering, let us move
 away!

And thence to England. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE BOWER.

Geoffrey (coming out of the wood).
 Light again! light again! Margery?
 no, that's a finer thing there. How
 it glitters!

Eleanor (entering). Come to me, little
 one. How camest thou hither?

Geoffrey. On my legs.

Eleanor. And mighty pretty legs
 too. Thou art the prettiest child I
 ever saw. Wilt thou love me?

Geoffrey. No; I only love mother.

Eleanor. Ay; and who is thy mother?

Geoffrey. They call her — But she lives secret, you see.

Eleanor. Why?

Geoffrey. Don't know why.

Eleanor. Ay, but some one comes to see her now and then. Who is he?

Geoffrey. Can't tell.

Eleanor. What does she call him?

Geoffrey. My liege.

Eleanor. Pretty one, how camest thou?

Geoffrey. There was a bit of yellow silk here and there, and it looked pretty like a glowworm, and I thought if I followed it I should find the fairies.

Eleanor. I am the fairy, pretty one, a good fairy to thy mother. Take me to her.

Geoffrey. There are good fairies and bad fairies, and sometimes she cries, and can't sleep sound o' nights because of the bad fairies.

Eleanor. She shall cry no more; she shall sleep sound enough if thou wilt take me to her. I am her good fairy.

Geoffrey. But you don't look like a good fairy. Mother does. You are not pretty, like mother.

Eleanor. We can't all of us be as pretty as thou art — (*aside*) little bastard. Come, here is a golden chain I will give thee if thou wilt lead me to thy mother.

Geoffrey. No — no gold. Mother says gold spoils all. Love is the only gold.

Eleanor. I love thy mother, my pretty boy. Show me where thou camest out of the wood.

Geoffrey. By this tree; but I don't know if I can find the way back again.

Eleanor. Where's the warder?

Geoffrey. Very bad. Somebody struck him.

Eleanor. Ay? who was that?

Geoffrey. Can't tell. But I heard say he had had a stroke, or you'd have heard his horn before now. Come along, then; we shall see the silk here and there, and I want my supper. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — ROSAMUND'S BOWER.

Rosamund. The boy so late; pray God, he be not lost.

I sent this Margery, and she comes not back;

I sent another, and she comes not back.

I go myself — so many alleys, crossings,

Paths, avenues — nay, if I lost him, now

The folds have fallen from the mystery,
And left all naked, I were lost indeed.

Enter GEOFFREY and ELEANOR.

Geoffrey, the pain thou hast put me to!
[*Seeing Eleanor.*
Ha, you!

How came you hither?

Eleanor. Your own child brought me hither!

Geoffrey. You said you couldn't trust Margery, and I watched her and followed her into the woods, and I lost her and went on and on till I found the light and the lady, and she says she can make you sleep o' nights.

Rosamund. How dared you? Know you not this bower is secret,

Of and belonging to the King of England,

More sacred than his forests for the chase?

Nay, nay, Heaven help you; get you hence in haste

Lest worse befall you.

Eleanor. Child, I am mine own self Of and belonging to the King. The King Hath divers ofs and ons, ofs and belongings,

Almost as many as your true Mussulman —

Belongings, paramours, whom it pleases him

To call his wives; but so it chances, child,

That I am his main paramour, his sultana.

But since the fondest pair of doves will jar,

Ev'n in a cage of gold, we had words of late,

And thereupon he call'd my children bastards.

Do you believe that you are married to him?

Rosamund. I should believe it.

Eleanor. You must not believe it, Because I have a wholesome medicine here

Puts that belief asleep. Your answer, beauty!

Do you believe that you are married to him?

Rosamund. Geoffrey, my boy, I saw the ball you lost in the fork of the great willow over the brook. Go. See that you do not fall in. Go.

Geoffrey. And leave you alone with the good fairy. She calls you beauty, but I don't like her looks. Well, you bid me go, and I'll have my ball anyhow. Shall I find you asleep when I come back?

Rosamund. Go. [*Exit Geoffrey.*]

Eleanor. He is easily found again.
Do you believe it?

I pray you then to take my sleeping-draught;

But if you should not care to take it — see! [*Draws a dagger.*]

What! have I scared the red rose from your face

Into your heart. But this will find it there,

And dig it from the root for ever.

Rosamund. Help! help!

Eleanor. They say that walls have ears; but these, it seems,

Have none! and I have none — to pity thee.

Rosamund. I do beseech you — my child is so young,
So backward too; I cannot leave him yet.

I am not so happy I could not die myself,

But the child is so young. You have children — his;

And mine is the King's child; so, if you love him —

Nay, if you love him, there is great wrong done

Somehow; but if you do not — there are those

Who say you do not love him — let me go

With my young boy, and I will hide my face,

Blacken and gipsyfy it; none shall know me;

The King shall never hear of me again,

But I will beg my bread along the world

With my young boy, and God will be our guide.

I never meant you harm in any way. See, I can say no more.

Eleanor. Will you not say you are not married to him?

Rosamund. Ay, Madam, I can say it, if you will.

Eleanor. Then is thy pretty boy a bastard?

Rosamund. No.

Eleanor. And thou thyself a proven wanton?

Rosamund. No.

I am none such. I never loved but one. I have heard of such that range from

love to love,
Like the wild beast — if you can call it love.

I have heard of such — yea, even among those

Who sit on thrones — I never saw any such,

Never knew any such, and howsoever You do misname me, match'd with any

such,

I am snow to mud.

Eleanor. The more the pity then
That thy true home — the heavens —
cry out for thee
Who art too pure for earth.

Enter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. Give her to me.

Eleanor. The Judas-lover of our passion-play

Hath track'd us hither.

Fitzurse. Well, why not? I follow'd
You and the child: he babbled all the way.

Give her to me to make my honey-moon.

Eleanor. Ay, as the bears love honey.

Could you keep her
Indungeon'd from one whisper of the wind,

Dark even from a side glance of the moon,

And oublietted in the centre — No!

I follow out my hate and thy revenge.

Fitzurse. You bade me take revenge
another way —

To bring her to the dust. . . . Come
with me, love,

And I will love thee. . . . Madam,
let her live.

I have a far-off burrow where the King
Would miss her and for ever.

Eleanor. How sayest thou, sweet-heart?

Wilt thou go with him? he will marry thee.

Rosamund. Give me the poison;
set me free of him!

[*Eleanor offers the vial.*
No, no! I will not have it.

Eleanor. Then this other,
The wiser choice, because my sleep-

ing-draught
May bloat thy beauty out of shape,

and make
Thy body loathsome even to thy child;

While this but leaves thee with a broken heart,

A doll-face blanch'd and bloodless,
over which

If pretty Geoffrey do not break his own,

It must be broken for him.

Rosamund. O I see now.

Your purpose is to fright me — a troubadour

You play with words. You had never used so many,

Not if you meant it, I am sure. The child . . .

No . . . mercy! No! [*Kneels.*]

Eleanor. Play! . . . that bosom never

Heaved under the King's hand with such true passion

As at this loveless knife that stirs the riot,

Which it will quench in blood ! Slave,
 if he love thee,
 Thy life is worth the wrestle for it :
 arise,
 And dash thyself against me that I
 may slay thee !
 The worm ! shall I let her go ? But
 ha ! what's here ?
 By very God, the cross I gave the
 King !
 His village darling in some lewd
 caress
 Has wheedled it off the King's neck
 to her own.
 By thy leave, beauty. Ay, the'same !
 I warrant
 Thou hast sworn on this my cross a
 hundred times
 Never to leave him — and that merits
 death,
 False oath on holy cross — for thou
 must leave him
 To-day, but not quite yet. My good
 Fitzurse,
 The running down the chase is kind-
 lier sport
 Ev'n than the death. Who knows
 but that thy lover
 May plead so pitifully, that I may
 spare thee ?
 Come hither, man ; stand there. (*To*
Rosamund.) Take thy one
 chance ;
 Catch at the last straw. Kneel to
 thy lord Fitzurse ;
 Crouch even because thou hatest him ;
 fawn upon him
 For thy life and thy son's.
Rosamund (rising). I am a Clifford,
 My son a Clifford and Plantagenet.
 I am to die then, tho' there stand
 beside thee
 One who might grapple with thy dag-
 ger, if he
 Had aught of man, or thou of
 woman ; or I
 Would bow to such a baseness as
 would make me
 Most worthy of it : both of us will die,
 And I will fly with my sweet boy to
 heaven,
 And shriek to all the saints among
 the stars :
 " Eleanor of Aquitaine, Eleanor of
 England !
 Murder'd by that adulteress Eleanor,
 Whose doings are a horror to the east,
 A hissing in the west ! " Have we
 not heard
 Raymond of Poitou, thine own uncle
 — nay,
 Geoffrey Plantagenet, thine own hus-
 band's father —
 Nay, ev'n the accursed heathen Sal-
 addeen —
 Strike !

I challenge thee to meet me before
 God.

Answer me there.

Eleanor (raising the dagger). This
 in thy bosom, fool,
 And after in thy bastard's !

Enter BECKET from behind. Catches
hold of her arm.

Becket.

Murderess !

[*The dagger falls ; they stare at one an-*
other After a pause.]

Eleanor. My lord, we know you
 proud of your fine hand,
 But having now admired it long
 enough,

We find that it is mightier than it
 seems —

At least mine own is frailer : you are
 laming it.

Becket. And lamed and maim'd to
 dislocation, better

Than raised to take a life which
 Henry bade me

Guard from the stroke that dooms
 thee after death

To wail in deathless flame.

Eleanor. Nor you, nor I
 Have now to learn, my lord, that our
 good Henry

Says many a thing in sudden heats,
 which he

Gainsays by next sunrising — often
 ready

To tear himself for having said as
 much.

My lord, Fitzurse —

Becket. He too ! what dost thou
 here ?

Dares the bear slouch into the lion's
 den ?

One downward plunge of his paw
 would rend away

Eyesight and manhood, life itself,
 from thee.

Go, lest I blast thee with anathema,
 And make thee a world's horror.

Fitzurse. My lord, I shall
 Remember this.

Becket. I do remember thee ;
 Lest I remember thee to the lion, go.

[*Exit Fitzurse.*]
 Take up your dagger ; put it in the
 sheath.

Eleanor. Might not your courtesies
 stoop to hand it me ?

But crowns must bow when mitres sit
 so high.

Well — well — too costly to be left or
 lost. [*Picks up the dagger.*]

I had it from an Arab soldan, who,
 When I was there in Antioch, mar-
 vell'd at

Our unfamiliar beauties of the west ;
 But wonder'd more at my much con-
 stancy

To the monk-king, Louis, our former
burthen,
From whom, as being too kin, you
know, my lord,
God's grace and Holy Church deliver'd
us.

I think, time given, I could have talk'd
him out of
His ten wives into one. Look at the
hilt.

What excellent workmanship. In our
poor west
We cannot do it so well.

Becket. We can do worse.
Madam, I saw your dagger at her
throat;

I heard your savage cry.

Eleanor. Well acted, was it?
A comedy meant to seem a tragedy —
A feint, a farce. My honest lord, you
are known

Thro' all the courts of Christendom as
one

That mars a cause with over-violence.
You have wrong'd Fitzurse. I speak
not of myself.

We thought to scare this minion of the
King

Back from her churchless commerce
with the King

To the fond arms of her first love,
Fitzurse,

Who swore to marry her. You have
spoil't the farce.

My savage cry? Why, she — she —
when I strove

To work against her license for her
good,

Bark'd out at me such monstrous
charges, that

The King himself, for love of his own
sons,

If hearing, would have spurn'd her;
whereupon

I menaced her with this, as when we
threaten

A yelper with a stick. Nay, I deny
not

That I was somewhat anger'd. Do you
hear me?

Believe or no, I care not. You have
lost

The ear of the King. I have it. . . .
My lord Paramount,

Our great High-priest, will not your
Holiness

Vouchsafe a gracious answer to your
Queen?

Becket. Rosamund hath not an-
swer'd you one word;

Madam, I will not answer you one
word.

Daughter, the world hath trick'd thee.
Leave it, daughter;

Come thou with me to Godstow nun-
nery,

And live what may be left thee of a
life
Saved as by miracle alone with Him
Who gave it.

Re-enter GEOFFREY.

Geoffrey. Mother, you told me a
great fib: it wasn't in the willow.

Becket. Follow us, my son, and we
will find it for thee —
Or something manlier.

[*Exeunt* Becket, Rosamund, and
Geoffrey.

Eleanor. The world hath trick'd her
— that's the King; if so,
There was the farce, the feint — not
mine. And yet

I am all but sure my dagger was a
feint

Till the worm turn'd — not life shot
up in blood,

But death drawn in; — (*looking at the
vial*) this was no feint then? no.

But can I swear to that, had she but
given

Plain answer to plain query? nay,
methinks

Had she but bow'd herself to meet the
wave

Of humiliation, worshipt whom she
loathed,

I should have let her be, scorn'd her
too much

To harm her. Henry — Becket tells
him this —

To take my life might lose him
Aquitaine.

Too politic for that. Imprison me?
No, for it came to nothing — only a
feint.

Did she not tell me I was playing on
her?

I'll swear to mine own self it was a
feint.

Why should I swear, Eleanor, who
am, or was,

A sovereign power? The King plucks
out their eyes

Who anger him, and shall not I, the
Queen,

Tear out her heart — kill, kill with
knife or venom

One of his slanderous harlots? "None
of such?"

I love her none the more. Tut, the
chance gone,

She lives — but not for him; one point
is gain'd.

O I, that thro' the Pope divorced King
Louis,

Scorning his monkery, — I that wedded
Henry,

Honoring his manhood — will he not
mock at me

The jealous fool balk'd of her will —
with *him*?

But he and he must never meet again.
Reginald Fitzurse!

Re-enter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. Here, Madam, at your pleasure.

Eleanor. My pleasure is to have a man about me.

Why did you slink away so like a cur?

Fitzurse. Madam, I am as much man as the King.

Madam, I fear Church-censures like your King.

Eleanor. He grovels to the Church when he's black-blooded,

But kinglike fought the proud archbishop, — kinglike

Defied the Pope, and, like his kingly sires,

The Normans, striving still to break or bind

The spiritual giant with our island laws

And customs, made me for the moment proud

Ev'n of that stale Church-bond which link'd me with him

To bear him kingly sons. I am not so sure

But that I love him still. Thou as much man!

No more of that; we will to France and be

Beforehand with the King, and brew from out

This Godstow-Becket intermeddling such

A strong hate-philtre as may madden him — madden

Against his priest beyond all hellebore.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — CASTLE IN NORMANDY.
KING'S CHAMBER.

HENRY, ROGER OF YORK, FOLIOT,
JOCELYN OF SALISBURY.

Roger of York. Nay, nay, my liege,
He rides abroad with armed followers,
Hath broken all his promises to thyself,

Cursed and anathematized us right and left,

Stirr'd up a party there against your son —

Henry. Roger of York, you always hated him,

Even when you both were boys at Theobald's.

Roger of York. I always hated boundless arrogance.

In mine own cause I strove against him there,

And in thy cause I strive against him now.

Henry. I cannot think he moves against my son,

Knowing right well with what a tenderness

He loved my son.

Roger of York. Before you made him king.

But Becket ever moves against a king.
The Church is all — the crime to be a king.

We trust your Royal Grace, lord of more land

Than any crown in Europe, will not yield

To lay your neck beneath your citizens' heel.

Henry. Not to a Gregory of my throning! No.

Foliot. My royal liege, in aiming at your love,

It may be sometimes I have over-shot

My duties to our Holy Mother Church,
Tho' all the world allows I fall no inch

Behind this Becket, rather go beyond
In scourgings, macerations, mortify-

ings,

Fasts, disciplines that clear the spiritual eye,

And break the soul from earth. Let all that be.

I boast not: but you know thro' all this quarrel

I still have cleaved to the crown, in hope the crown

Would cleave to me that but obey'd the crown,

Crowning your son; for which our loyal service,

And since we likewise swore to obey the customs,

York and myself, and our good Salisbury here,

Are push'd from out communion of the Church.

Jocelyn of Salisbury. Becket hath trodden on us like worms, my liege;

Trodden one half dead; one half, but half-alive,

Cries to the King.

Henry (aside). Take care o' thyself, O King.

Jocelyn of Salisbury. Being so crush'd and so humiliated

We scarcely dare to bless the food we eat

Because of Becket.

Henry. What would ye have me do?

Roger of York. Summon your barons; take their counsel: yet

I know — could swear — as long as Becket breathes,

Your Grace will never have one quiet hour.

Henry. What? . . . Ay . . . but pray you do not work upon me.

I see your drift . . . it may be so . . . and yet

You know me easily anger'd. Will you hence?

He shall absolve you . . . you shall have redress.

I have a dizzying headache. Let me rest.

I'll call you by and by.

[*Exeunt* Roger of York, Foliot, and Jocelyn of Salisbury.

Would he were dead! I have lost all love for him.

If God would take him in some sudden way —

Would he were dead. [*Lies down.*

Page (*entering*). My liege, the Queen of England.

Henry. God's eyes! [*Starting up.*

Enter ELEANOR.

Eleanor. Of England? Say of Aquitaine.

I am no Queen of England. I had dream'd

I was the bride of England, and a queen.

Henry. And, — while you dream'd you were the bride of England, —

Stirring her baby-king against me? ha!

Eleanor. The brideless Becket is thy king and mine:

I will go live and die in Aquitaine.

Henry. Except I clap thee into prison here,

Lest thou shouldst play the wanton there again.

Ha, you of Aquitaine! O you of Aquitaine!

You were but Aquitaine to Louis — no wife;

You are only Aquitaine to me — no wife.

Eleanor. And why, my lord, should I be wife to one

That only wedded me for Aquitaine? Yet this no wife — her six and thirty sail

Of Provence blew you to your English throne;

And this no wife has borne you four brave sons,

And one of them at least is like to prove

Bigger in our small world than thou art.

Henry. Ay —

Richard, if he be mine — I hope him mine.

But thou art like enough to make him thine.

Eleanor. Becket is like enough to make all his.

Henry. Methought I had recover'd of the Becket,

That all was planed and bevell'd smooth again,

Save from some hateful cantrip of thine own.

Eleanor. I will go live and die in Aquitaine.

I dream'd I was the consort of a king,

Not one whose back his priest has broken.

Henry. What!

Is the end come? You, will you crown my foe

My victor in mid-battle? I will be Sole master of my house. The end is mine.

What game, what juggle, what devilry are you playing?

Why do you thrust this Becket on me again?

Eleanor. Why? for I am true wife, and have my fears

Lest Becket thrust you even from your throne.

Do you know this cross, my liege?

Henry (*turning his head*). Away! Not I.

Eleanor. Not ev'n the central diamond, worth, I think,

Half of the Antioch whence I had it.

Henry. That?

Eleanor. I gave it to you, and you your paramour;

She sends it back, as being dead to earth,

So dead henceforth to you.

Henry. Dead! you have murder'd her,

Found out her secret bower and murder'd her.

Eleanor. Your Becket knew the secret of your bower.

Henry (*calling out*). Ho there! thy rest of life is hopeless prison.

Eleanor. And what would my own Aquitaine say to that?

First, free thy captive from her hopeless prison.

Henry. O devil, can I free her from the grave?

Eleanor. You are too tragic: both of us are players

In such a comedy as our court of Provence

Had laugh'd at. That's a delicate Latin lay

Of Walter Map: the lady holds the cleric

Lovelier than any soldier, his poor tonsure

A crown of Empire. Will you have it again?

[*Offering the cross. He dashes it down.*]

St. Cupid, that is too irreverent.

Then mine once more. (*Puts it on.*)

Your cleric hath your lady.

Nay, what uncemely faces, could he see you!

Foam at the mouth because King Thomas, lord

Not only of your vassals but amours,

Thro' chasteest honor of the Decalogue Hath used the full authority of his Church

To put her into Godstow nunnery.

Henry. To put her into Godstow nunnery!

He dared not—liar! yet, yet I remember—

I do remember.

He bade me put her into a nunnery— Into Godstow, into Hellstow, Devilstow!

The Church! the Church!

God's eyes! I would the Church were down in hell! [*Exit.*]

Eleanor. Aha!

Enter the four KNIGHTS.

Fitzurse. What made the King cry out so furiously?

Eleanor. Our Becket, who will not absolve the Bishops.

I think ye four have cause to love this Becket.

Fitzurse. I hate him for his insolence to all.

De Tracy. And I for his insolence to thee.

De Brito. I hate him for I hate him is my reason,

And yet I hate him for a hypocrite.

De Morville. I do not love him, for he did his best

To break the barons, and now braves the King.

Eleanor. Strike, then, at once, the King would have him—See!

Re-enter HENRY.

Henry. No man to love me, honor me, obey me!

Sluggards and fools!

The slave that eat my bread has kick'd his King!

The dog I cramm'd with dainties worried me!

The fellow that on a lame jade came to court,

A ragged cloak for saddle—he, he, he,

To shake my throne, to push into my chamber—

My bed, where ev'n the slave is private—he—

I'll have her out again, he shall absolve

The bishops—they but did my will— not you—

Sluggards and fools, why do you stand and stare?

You are no king's men—you—you—you are Becket's men.

Down with King Henry! up with the Archbishop!

Will no man free me from this pestilent priest? [*Exit.*]

[*The Knights draw their swords.*]

Eleanor. Are ye king's men? I am king's woman, I.

The Knights. King's men! King's men!

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN CANTERBURY MONASTERY.

BECKET and JOHN OF SALISBURY.

Becket. York said so?

John of Salisbury. Yes: a man may take good counsel

Ev'n from his foe.

Becket. York will say anything. What is he saying now? gone to the King

And taken our anathema with him. York!

Can the King de-anathematize this York?

John of Salisbury. Thomas, I would thou hadst return'd to England, Like some wise prince of this world from his wars,

With more of olive-branch and amnesty

For foes at home—thou hast raised the world against thee.

Becket. Why, John, my kingdom is not of this world.

John of Salisbury. If it were more of this world it might be More of the next. A policy of wise pardon

Wins here as well as there. To bless thine enemies—

Becket. Ay, mine, not Heaven's.

John of Salisbury. And may there not be something

Of this world's leaven in thee too, when crying

On Holy Church to thunder out her rights

And thine own wrong so pitilessly? Ah, Thomas,

The lightnings that we think are only Heaven's

Flash sometimes out of earth against the heavens.

The soldier, when he lets his whole
 self go
 Lost in the common good, the com-
 mon wrong,
 Strikes truest ev'n for his own self.
 I crave
 Thy pardon — I have still thy leave
 to speak.
 Thou hast waged God's war against
 the King; and yet
 We are self-uncertain creatures, and
 we may,
 Yea, even when we know not, mix our
 spites
 And private hates with our defence of
 Heaven.

Enter EDWARD GRIM.

Becket. Thou art but yesterday
 from Cambridge, Grim;
 What say ye there of Becket?

Grim. I believe him
 The bravest in our roll of Primates
 down

From Austin — there are some — for
 there are men

Of canker'd judgment everywhere —
Becket. Who hold

With York, with York against me.

Grim. Well, my lord,
 A stranger monk desires access to you.

Becket. York against Canterbury,
 York against God!
 I am open to him. [*Exit Grim.*]

Enter ROSAMUND as a Monk.

Rosamund. Can I speak with you
 Alone, my father?

Becket. Come you to confess?

Rosamund. Not now.

Becket. Then speak; this is my
 other self,

Who like my conscience never lets
 me be.

Rosamund (throwing back the cowl).
 I know him; our good John of
 Salisbury.

Becket. Breaking already from thy
 novitiate

To plunge into this bitter world
 - again —

These wells of Marah. I am grieved,
 my daughter.

I thought that I had made a peace for
 thee.

Rosamund. Small peace was mine
 in my novitiate, father.

Thro' all closed doors a dreadful
 whisper crept

That thou wouldst excommunicate the
 King.

I could not eat, sleep, pray: I had
 with me

The monk's disguise thou gavest me
 for my bower:

I think our Abbess knew it and
 allow'd it.

I fled, and found thy name a charm to
 get me

Food, roof, and rest. I met a robber
 once,

I told him I was bound to see the
 Archbishop;

"Pass on," he said, and in thy name
 I pass'd

From house to house. In one a son
 stone-blind

Sat by his mother's hearth: he had
 gone too far

Into the King's own woods; and the
 poor mother,

Soon as she learnt I was a friend of
 thine,

Cried out against the cruelty of the
 King.

I said it was the King's courts, not
 the King;

But she would not believe me, and
 she wish'd

The Church were King: she had seen
 the Archbishop once,

So mild, so kind. The people love
 thee, father.

Becket. Alas! when I was Chancel-
 lor to the King,

I fear I was as cruel as the King.

Rosamund. Cruel? Oh, no — it is
 the law, not he;

The customs of the realm.

Becket. The customs! customs!

Rosamund. My lord, you have not
 excommunicated him?

Oh, if you have, absolve him!

Becket. Daughter, daughter,
 Deal not with things you know not.

Rosamund. I know him.
 Then you have done it, and I call you
 cruel.

John of Salisbury. No, daughter,
 you mistake our good Arch-
 bishop;

For once in France the King had been
 so harsh,

He thought to excommunicate him —
 Thomas,

You could not — old affection mas-
 ter'd you,

You falter'd into tears.

Rosamund. God bless him for it.

Becket. Nay, make me not a
 woman, John of Salisbury,
 Nor make me traitor to my holy
 office.

Did not a man's voice ring along the
 aisle,

"The King is sick and almost unto
 death."

How could I excommunicate him
 then?

Rosamund. And wilt thou excom-
 municate him now?

Becket. Daughter, my time is short,
I shall not do it.
And were it longer — well — I should
not do it.

Rosamund. Thanks in this life, and
in the life to come.

Becket. Get thee back to thy nun-
nery with all haste;
Let this be thy last trespass. But
one question —
How fares thy pretty boy, the little
Geoffrey?

No fever, cough, croup, sickness?

Rosamund. No, but saved
From all that by our solitude. The
plagues
That smite the city spare the soli-
tudes.

Becket. God save him from all
sickness of the soul!
Thee too, thy solitude among thy
nuns,

May that save thee! Doth he re-
member me?

Rosamund. I warrant him.

Becket. He is marvellously like
thee.

Rosamund. Liker the King.

Becket. No, daughter.

Rosamund. Ay, but wait
Till his nose rises; he will be very
king.

Becket. Ev'n so: but think not of
the King: farewell!

Rosamund. My lord, the city is
full of armed men.

Becket. Ev'n so: farewell!

Rosamund. I will but pass to ves-
pers,
And breathe one prayer for my liege-
lord the King,
His child and mine own soul, and so
return.

Becket. Pray for me too: much
need of prayer have I.

[*Rosamund kneels and goes.*]

Dan John, how much we lose, we celi-
bates,
Lacking the love of woman and of
child.

John of Salisbury. More gain than
loss; for of your wives you
shall

Find one a slut whose fairest linen
seems

Foul as her dust-cloth, if she used it
— one

So charged with tongue, that every
thread of thought

Is broken ere it joins — a shrew to
boot,

Whose evil song far on into the night
Thrills to the topmost tile — no hope
but death;

One slow, fat, white, a burthen of the
hearth;

And one that being thwarted ever
swoons

And weeps herself into the place of
power;

And one an *uxor pauperis* *Ibyci*.

So rare the household honeymaking
bee,

Man's help! but we, we have the
Blessed Virgin

For worship, and our Mother Church
for bride;

And all the souls we saved and
father'd here

Will greet us as our babes in Paradise.
What noise was that? she told us of

arm'd men
Here in the city. Will you not with-
draw?

Becket. I once was out with Henry
in the days

When Henry loved me, and we came
upon

A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still
I reach'd my hand and touch'd; she
did not stir;

The snow had frozen round her, and
she sat

Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold
eggs.

Look! how this love, this mother,
runs thro' all

The world God made — even the
beast — the bird!

John of Salisbury. Ay, still a lover
of the beast and bird?

But these arm'd men — will you not
hide yourself?

Perchance the fierce De Brocs from
Saltwood Castle,

To assail our Holy Mother lest she
brood

Too long o'er this hard egg, the world,
and send

Her whole heart's heat into it, till it
break

Into young angels. Pray you, hide
yourself.

Becket. There was a little fair-
hair'd Norman maid

Lived in my mother's house: if *Rosa-*
mund is

The world's rose, as her name imports
her — she

Was the world's lily.

John of Salisbury. Ay, and what of
her?

Becket. She died of leprosy.

John of Salisbury. I know not why
You call these old things back again,
my lord.

Becket. The drowning man, they
say, remembers all

The chances of his life, just ere he dies.

John of Salisbury. Ay — but these
arm'd men — will you drown
yourself?

He loses half the meed of martyrdom

Who will be martyr when he might escape.

Becket. What day of the week? Tuesday?

John of Salisbury. Tuesday, my lord.

Becket. On a Tuesday was I born, and on a Tuesday Baptized; and on a Tuesday did I fly Forth from Northampton; on a Tuesday pass'd From England into bitter banishment;

On a Tuesday at Pontigny came to me

The ghostly warning of my martyrdom;

On a Tuesday from mine exile I return'd,

And on a Tuesday —

[*Tracy enters, then Fitzurse, De Brito, and De Morville. Monks following.*

— on a Tuesday — *Tracy!*

[*A long silence, broken by Fitzurse saying, contemptuously,*

God help thee!

John of Salisbury (aside). How the good Archbishop reddens!

He never yet could brook the note of scorn.

Fitzurse. My lord, we bring a message from the King

Beyond the water; will you have it alone,

Or with these listeners near you?

Becket. As you will.

Fitzurse. Nay, as you will.

Becket. Nay, as you will.

John of Salisbury. Why then Better perhaps to speak with them apart.

Let us withdraw.

[*All go out except the four Knights and Becket.*

Fitzurse. We are all alone with him.

Shall I not smite him with his own cross-staff?

De Morville. No, look! the door is open: let him be.

Fitzurse. The King condemns your excommunicating —

Becket. This is no secret, but a public matter.

In here again!

[*John of Salisbury and Monks return.*

Now, sirs, the King's commands!

Fitzurse. The King beyond the water, thro' our voices,

Commands you to be dutiful and leal To your young King on this side of the water,

Not scorn him for the foibles of his youth.

What! you would make his coronation void

By cursing those who crown'd him. Out upon you!

Becket. Reginald, all men know I loved the Prince.

His father gave him to my care, and I Became his second father: he had his faults,

For which I would have laid my own life down

To help him from them, since indeed I loved him,

And love him next after my lord his father.

Rather than dim the splendor of his crown

I fain would treble and quadruple it With revenues, realms, and golden provinces

So that were done in equity.

Fitzurse. You have broken

Your bond of peace, your treaty with the King —

Wakening such brawls and loud disturbances

In England, that he calls you oversea To answer for it in his Norman courts.

Becket. Prate not of bonds, for never, oh, never again

Shall the waste voice of the bond-breaking sea

Divide me from the mother church of England,

My Canterbury. Loud disturbances! Oh, ay — the bells rang out even to deafening,

Organ and pipe, and dulcimer, chants and hymns

In all the churches, trumpets in the halls,

Sobs, laughter, cries: they spread their raiment down

Before me — would have made my pathway flowers,

Save that it was mid-winter in the street,

But full mid-summer in those honest hearts.

Fitzurse. The King commands you to absolve the bishops

Whom you have excommunicated.

Becket. I?

Not I, the Pope. Ask him for absolution.

Fitzurse. But you advised the Pope.

Becket. And so I did.

They have but to submit.

The Four Knights. The King commands you.

We are all King's men.

Becket. King's men at least should know

That their own King closed with me
last July
That I should pass the censures of
the Church
On those that crown'd young Henry
in this realm,
And trampled on the rights of Can-
terbury.

Fitzurse. What! dare you charge
the King with treachery?
He sanction thee to excommunicate
The prelates whom he chose to crown
his son!

Becket. I spake no word of treach-
ery, Reginald.
But for the truth of this I make appeal
To all the archbishops, bishops, pre-
lates, barons,
Monks, knights, five hundred, that
were there and heard.
Nay, you yourself were there: you
heard yourself.

Fitzurse. I was not there.

Becket. I saw you there.

Fitzurse. I was not.

Becket. You were. I never forget
anything.

Fitzurse. He makes the King a
traitor, me a liar.
How long shall we forbear him?

John of Salisbury (*drawing Becket
aside*). O my good lord,
Speak with them privately on this
hereafter.

You see they have been revelling,
and I fear

Are braced and brazen'd up with
Christmas wines

For any murderous brawl.

Becket. And yet they prate
Of mine, my brawls, when those, that
name themselves

Of the King's part, have broken down
our barns,

Wasted our diocese, outraged our ten-
ants.

Lifted our produce, driven our clerics
out —

Why they, your friends, these ruffians,
the De Brocs,

They stood on Dover beach to mur-
der me,

They slew my stags in mine own manor
here,

Mutilated, poor brute, my sumpter-
mule,

Plunder'd the vessel full of Gascon
wine,

The old King's present, carried off the
casks,

Kill'd half the crew, dungeon'd the
other half

In Pevensey Castle —

De Morville. Why not rather then,
If this be so, complain to your young
King,

Not punish of your own authority?

Becket. Mine enemies barr'd all ac-
cess to the boy.

They knew he loved me.

Hugh, Hugh, how proudly you exalt
your head!

Nay, when they seek to overturn our
rights,

I ask no leave of king, or mortal man,
To set them straight again. Alone I
do it.

Give to the King the things that are
the King's,

And those of God to God.

Fitzurse. Threats! threats!
ye hear him.

What! will he excommunicate all the
world?

[*The Knights come round Becket.*

De Tracy. He shall not.

De Brito. Well, as yet

— I should be grateful —

He hath not excommunicated me.

Becket. Because thou wast born ex-
communicate.

I never spied in thee one gleam of
grace.

De Brito. Your Christian's Chris-
tian charity.

Becket. By St. Denis —

De Brito. Ay, by St. Denis, now will
he flame out,

And lose his head as old St. Denis
did.

Becket. Ye think to scare me from
my loyalty

To God and to the Holy Father.
No!

Tho' all the swords in England flash'd
above me

Ready to fall at Henry's word or
yours —

Tho' all the loud-lung'd trumpets
upon earth

Blared from the heights of all the
thrones of her kings,

Blowing the world against me, I would
stand

Clothed with the full authority of
Rome,

Mail'd in the perfect panoply of faith,
First of the foremost of their files,

who die

For God, to people heaven in the great
day

When God makes up his jewels. Once
I fled —

Never again, and you — I marvel at
you —

Ye know what is between us. Ye
have sworn

Yourselves my men when I was Chan-
cellor —

My vassals — and yet threaten your
Archbishop

In his own house.

Knights. Nothing can be between us
That goes against our fealty to the
King.

Fitzurse. And in his name we charge
you that ye keep
This traitor from escaping.

Becket. Rest you easy,
For I am easy to keep. I shall not fly.
Here, here, here will you find me.

De Morville. Know you not
You have spoken to the peril of your
life?

Becket. As I shall speak again.

Fitzurse, De Tracy, and De Brito. To
arms!

[*They rush out, De Morville lingers.*

Becket. De Morville,
I had thought so well of you; and
even now

You seem the least assassin of the
four.

Oh, do not damn yourself for com-
pany!

Is it too late for me to save your soul?
I pray you for one moment stay and
speak.

De Morville. Becket, it is too late.

[*Exit.*
Becket. Is it too late?
Too late on earth may be too soon in
hell.

Knights (in the distance). Close the
great gate — ho, there — upon
the town.

Becket's Retainers. Shut the hall-
doors. [*A pause.*

Becket. You hear them, brother
John;
Why do you stand so silent, brother
John?

John of Salisbury. For I was mus-
ing on an ancient saw,
Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,
Is strength less strong when hand-in-
hand with grace?

Gratior in pulchrò corpore virtus.
Thomas,
Why should you heat yourself for
such as these?

Becket. Methought I answer'd mod-
erately enough.

John of Salisbury. As one that
blows the coal to cool the fire.
My lord, I marvel why you never lean
On any man's advising but your own.

Becket. Is it so, Dan John? well,
what should I have done?

John of Salisbury. You should have
taken counsel with your friends
Before these bandits brake into your
presence.

They seek — you make — occasion for
your death.

Becket. My counsel is already taken,
John.

I am prepared to die.

John of Salisbury. We are sinners
all,

The best of all not all-prepared to die.

Becket. God's will be done!

John of Salisbury. Ay, well. God's
will be done!

GRIM (re-entering).

Grim. My lord, the knights are
arming in the garden
Beneath the sycamore.

Becket. Good! let them arm.

Grim. And one of the De Brocs is
with them, Robert,
The apostate monk that was with
Randulf here.

He knows the twists and turnings of
the place.

Becket. No fear!

Grim. No fear, my lord.

[*Crashes on the hall-doors. The
Monks flee.*

Becket (rising). Our dove-cote flown!
I cannot tell why monks should all
be cowards.

John of Salisbury. Take refuge in
your own cathedral, Thomas.

Becket. Do they not fight the Great
Fiend day by day?

Valor and holy life should go together.
Why should all monks be cowards?

John of Salisbury. Are they so?
I say, take refuge in your own cathed-
dral.

Becket. Ay, but I told them I would
wait them here.

Grim. May they not say you dared
not show yourself

In your old place? and vespers are
beginning.

[*Bell rings for vespers till end of scene.*
You should attend the office, give
them heart.

They fear you slain: they dread they
know not what.

Becket. Ay, monks, not men.

Grim. I am a monk, my lord.

Perhaps, my lord, you wrong us.

Some would stand by you to the death.

Becket. Your pardon.

John of Salisbury. He said, "At-
tend the office."

Becket. Attend the office?

Why then — The Cross! — who bears
my Cross before me?

Methought they would have brain'd
me with it, John.

[*Grim takes it.*

Grim. I! Would that I could bear
thy cross indeed!

Becket. The Mitre!

John of Salisbury. Will you wear
it? — there!

[*Becket puts on the mitre.*

Becket. The Fall!

I go to meet my King!

[Puts on the pall.
Grim. To meet the King?

[Crashes on the doors as they go out.

John of Salisbury. Why do you move with such a stateliness?

Can you not hear them yonder like a storm,

Battering the doors, and breaking thro' the walls?

Becket. Why do the heathen rage?
My two good friends,

What matters murder'd here or murder'd there?

And yet my dream foretold my martyrdom

In mine own church. It is God's will.
Go on.

Nay, drag me not. We must not seem to fly.

SCENE III.—NORTH TRANSEPT OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL. ON THE RIGHT HAND A FLIGHT OF STEPS LEADING TO THE CHOIR, ANOTHER FLIGHT ON THE LEFT, LEADING TO THE NORTH AISLE. WINTER AFTERNOON SLOWLY DARKENING. LOW THUNDER NOW AND THEN OF AN APPROACHING STORM. MONKS HEARD CHANTING THE SERVICE. ROSAMUND KNEELING.

Rosamund. O blessed saint, O glorious Benedict,—

These arm'd men in the city, these fierce faces—

Thy holy follower founded Canterbury—

Save that dear head which now is Canterbury,

Save him, he saved my life, he saved my child,

Save him, his blood would darken Henry's name;

Save him till all as saintly as thyself
He miss the searching flame of purgatory, and pass at once perfect to Paradise.

[Noise of steps and voices in the cloisters.
Hark! Is it they? Coming! He is not here—

Not yet, thank heaven. O save him!
[Goes up steps leading to choir.]

BECKET *(entering, forced along by JOHN OF SALISBURY and GRIM)*.

Becket. No, I tell you! I cannot bear a hand upon my person, Why do you force me thus against my will?

Grim. My lord, we force you from your enemies.

Becket. As you would force a king from being crown'd.

John of Salisbury. We must not force the crown of martyrdom.

[Service stops. Monks come down from the stairs that lead to the choir.]

Monks. Here is the great Archbishop! He lives! he lives! Die with him, and be glorified together.

Becket. Together? . . . get you back! go on with the office.

Monks. Come, then, with us to vespers.

Becket. How can I come When you so block the entry? Back, I say!

Go on with the office. Shall not Heaven be served

Tho' earth's last earthquake clash'd the minster-bells,

And the great deeps were broken up again,

And hiss'd against the sun?

[Noise in the cloisters.
Monks. The murderers, hark!

Let us hide! let us hide!

Becket. What do these people fear?

Monks. Those arm'd men in the cloister.

Becket. Be not such cravens! I will go out and meet them.

Grim and others. Shut the doors! We will not have him slain before our face.

[They close the doors of the transept. Knocking.]

Fly, fly, my lord, before they burst the doors! *[Knocking.]*

Becket. Why, these are our own monks who follow'd us!

And will you bolt them out, and have them slain?

Undo the doors: the church is not a castle:

Knock, and it shall be open'd. Are you deaf?

What, have I lost authority among you?

Stand by, make way!

[Opens the doors. Enter Monks from cloister.]

Come in, my friends, come in! Nay, faster, faster!

Monks. Oh, my lord Archbishop, A score of knights all arm'd with swords and axes—

To the choir, to the choir!

[Monks divide, part flying by the stairs on the right, part by those on the left. The rush of these last bears Becket along with them some way up the steps, where he is left standing alone.]

Becket. Shall I too pass to the choir,

And die upon the Patriarchal throne Of all my predecessors?

John of Salisbury. No, to the crypt!

Twenty steps down. Stumble not in the darkness,
Lest they should seize thee.

Grim. To the crypt? no — no,
To the chapel of St. Blaise beneath the roof!

John of Salisbury (pointing upward and downward). That way, or this! Save thyself either way.

Becket. Oh, no, not either way, nor any way
Save by that way which leads thro' night to light.

Not twenty steps, but one.
And fear not I should stumble in the darkness,
Nor tho' it be their hour, the power of darkness,

But my hour too, the power of light in darkness!

I am not in the darkness but the light,
Seen by the Church in Heaven, the Church on earth —

The power of life in death to make her free!

[Enter the four Knights. *John of Salisbury flies to the altar of St. Benedict.*

Fitzurse. Here, here, King's men!
[Catches hold of the last flying Monk.

Where is the traitor Becket?
Monk. I am not he! I am not he, my lord.

I am not he indeed!
Fitzurse. Hence to the fiend!
[Pushes him away.

Where is this treble traitor to the King?
De Tracy. Where is the Archbishop, Thomas Becket?

Becket. Here.
No traitor to the King, but Priest of God,
Primate of England.

[Descending into the transept.
I am he ye seek.
What would ye have of me?

Fitzurse. Your life.
De Tracy. Your life.

De Morville. Save that you will absolve the bishops.

Becket. Never, —
Except they make submission to the Church.

You had my answer to that cry before.

De Morville. Why, then you are a dead man; flee!

Becket. I will not.
I am readier to be slain, than thou to slay.

Hugh, I know well thou hast but half a heart

To bathe this sacred pavement with my blood.

God pardon thee and these, but God's full curse

Shatter you all to pieces if ye harm One of my flock!

Fitzurse. Was not the great gate shut?

They are thronging in to vespers — half the town.

We shall be overwhelm'd. Seize him and carry him!

Come with us — nay — thou art our prisoner — come!

De Morville. Ay, make him prisoner, do not harm the man.

[*Fitzurse lays hold of the Archbishop's pall.*

Becket. Touch me not!

De Brito. How the good priest gods himself!

He is not yet ascended to the Father.

Fitzurse. I will not only touch, but drag thee hence.

Becket. Thou art my man, thou art my vassal. Away!

[Flings him off till he reels, almost to falling.

De Tracy (lays hold of the pall). Come; as he said, thou art our prisoner.

Becket. Down!
[Throws him headlong.

Fitzurse (advances with drawn sword). I told thee that I should remember thee!

Becket. Profligate pander!
Fitzurse. Do you hear that? strike, strike.

[Strikes off the Archbishop's mitre, and wounds him in the forehead.

Becket (covers his eyes with his hand). I do commend my cause to God, the Virgin,
St. Denis of France and St. Alphege of England,
And all the tutelar Saints of Canterbury.

[*Grim wraps his arms about the Archbishop.*

Spare this defence, dear brother.
[*Tracy has arisen, and approaches, hesitatingly, with his sword raised.*

Fitzurse. Strike him, Tracy!
Rosamund (rushing down steps from choir). No, No, No, No!

Fitzurse. This wanton here. *De Morville,*
Hold her away.

De Morville. I hold her.
Rosamund (held back by *De Morville*, and stretching out her arms).

Mercy, mercy,
As you would hope for mercy.

Fitzurse. Strike, I say.

Grim. O God, O noble knights, O sacrilege!

Strike our Archbishop in his own cathedral!

The Pope, the King, will curse you —
the whole world
Abhor you; ye will die the death of
dogs!

Nay, nay, good Tracy. [*Lifts his arm.*
Fitzurse. Answer not, but strike.

De Tracy. There is my answer
then.

[*Sword falls on Grim's arm, and
glances from it, wounding Becket.*

Grim. Mine arm is sever'd.

I can no more — fight out the good
fight — die

Conqueror.

[*Staggers into the chapel of St.
Benedict.*

Becket (falling on his knees). At the
right hand of Power —

Power and great glory — for thy
Church, O Lord —

Into Thy hands, O Lord — into Thy
hands! — [*Sinks prone.*

De Brito. This last to rid thee of a
world of brawls! [*Kills him.*
The traitor's dead, and will arise no
more.

Fitzurse. Nay, have we still'd him?
What! the great Archbishop!
Does he breathe? No?

De Tracy. No, Reginald, he is dead.
[*Storm bursts.*¹

De Morville. Will the earth gape
and swallow us?

De Brito. The deed's done. —
Away!

[*De Brito, De Tracy, Fitzurse,
rush out, crying "King's men!"*
De Morville follows slowly.
*Flashes of lightning thro' the
Cathedral. Rosamund seen
kneeling by the body of Becket.*

¹ A tremendous thunderstorm actually
broke over the Cathedral as the murderers
were leaving it.

ADDITIONAL, OCCASIONAL, AND DISCARDED POEMS.



[The pieces in this division include some early and occasional poems omitted by Mr. Tennyson from the latest edition of his collected works; also some of his recent poems which do not appear in the author's edition.]

THE RINGLET.

I.

1.

"Your ringlets, your ringlets,
That look so golden gay,
If you will give me one, but one
To kiss it night and day,
Then never chilling touch of Time,
Will turn it silver-gray;
And then shall I know it is all true
gold
To flame and sparkle and stream as of
old,
Till all the comets in heaven are cold,
And all her stars decay."
"Then take it, love, and put it by;
This cannot change, nor yet can I."

2.

"My ringlet, my ringlet,
That art so golden-gay,
Now never chilling touch of Time
Can turn thee silver-gray;
And a lad may wink, and a girl may
hint,
And a fool may say his say;
For my doubts and fears were all
amiss,
And I swear henceforth by this and
this,
That a doubt will only come for a kiss,
And a fear to be kiss'd away."
"Then kiss it, love, and put it by:
If this can change, why so can I."

II.

1.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I kiss'd you night and day,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You still are golden-gay,
But Ringlet, O Ringlet,

You should be silver-gray:
For what is this which now I'm told,
I that took you for true gold,
She that gave you's bought and sold,
Sold, sold.

2.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She blush'd a rosy red,
When Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She clipt you from her head,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She gave you me, and said,
"Come, kiss it, love, and put it by:
If this can change, why so can I."
O fie, you golden nothing, fie
You golden lie.

3.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I count you much to blame,
For Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You put me much to shame,
So Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I doom you to the flame.
For what is this which now I learn,
Has given all my faith a turn?
Burn, you glossy heretic, burn,
Burn, burn.

SONG.

LADY, let the rolling drums
Beat to battle where thy warrior
stands:
Now thy face across his fancy
comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee:
Now their warrior father meets the
foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and
thee.

SONG.

HOME they brought him slain with
spears.

They brought him home at even-
fall:

All alone she sits and hears
Echoes in his empty hall,
Sounding on the morrow.

The sun peep'd in from open field,
The boy began to leap and prance,
Rode upon his father's lance,
Beat upon his father's shield —
"O hush, my joy, my sorrow."

TIMBUCTOO.¹

"Deep in that lion-haunted inland lies
A mystic city, goal of high emprise."
— CHAPMAN.

I stood upon the Mountain which
o'erlooks
The narrow seas, whose rapid interval
Parts Afric from green Europe, when
the Sun
Had fall'n below th' Atlantic, and
above
The silent heavens to blench'd with
faery light,
Uncertain whether faery light or
cloud,
Flowing Southward, and the chasms
of deep, deep blue
Slumber'd unfathomable, and the
stars
Were flooded over with clear glory
and pale.
I gazed upon the sheeny coast be-
yond,
There where the Giant of old Time
infix'd
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time erased from earth: even as
the Sea
When weary of wild inroad buildeth
up
Huge mounds whereby to stay his
yeasty waves.
And much I mused on legends quaint
and old
Which whilome won the hearts of all
on earth
Toward their brightness, ev'n as flame
draws air;
But had their being in the heart of
men
As air is th' life of flame: and thou
wert then
A center'd glory-circled memory,
Divinest Atalantis, whom the waves

¹ A Poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, MDCCCXIX. By A. TENNYSON, of Trinity College.

Have buried deep, and thou of later
name,
Imperial Eldorado, roof'd with gold:
Shadows to which, despite all shocks
of change,
All on-set of capricious accident,
Men clung with yearning hope which
would not die.
As when in some great city where the
walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly
faces thronged,
Do utter forth a subterranean voice,
Among the inner columns far retired
At midnight, in the lone Acropolis,
Before the awful genius of the place
Kneels the pale Priestess in deep
faith, the while
Above her head the weak lamp dips
and winks
Unto the fearful summoning without:
Nathless she ever clasps the marble
knees,
Bathes the cold hand with tears, and
gazeth on
Those eyes which wear no light but
that wherewith
Her phantasy informs them.
Where are ye,
Thrones of the Western wave, fair
Islands green?
Where are your moonlight halls, your
cedarn glooms,
The blossoming abysses of your hills?
Your flowering capes, and your gold-
sanded bays
Blown round with happy airs of odor-
ous winds?
Where are the infinite ways, which,
seraph-trod,
Wound through your great Elysian
solitudes,
Whose lowest depths were, as with vis-
ible love,
Filled with Divine effulgence, circum-
fused,
Flowing between the clear and pol-
ished stems,
And ever circling round their emerald
cones
In coronals and glories, such as gird
The unfading foreheads of the Saints
in Heaven?
For nothing visible, they say, had
birth
In that blest ground, but it was played
about
With its peculiar glory. Then I
raised
My voice and cried, "Wide Afric,
doth thy Sun
Lighten, thy hills enfold a city as
fair
As those which starred the night o'
the elder world?
Or is the rumor of thy Timbuctoo

A dream as frail as those of ancient time?"

A curve of whitening, flashing, ebbing light!

A rustling of white wings! the bright descent

Of a young Seraph! and he stood beside me

There on the ridge, and looked into my face

With his unutterable, shining orbs, So that with hasty motion I did veil

My vision with both hands, and saw before me

Such colored spots as dance athwart the eyes

Of those that gaze upon the noonday Sun.

Girt with a zone of flashing gold beneath

His breast and compassed round about his brow

With triple arch of everchanging bows,

And circled with the glory of living light

And alternation of all hues, he stood.

"O child of man, why muse you here alone

Upon the Mountain, on the dreams of old

Which filled the earth with passing loveliness,

Which flung strange music on the howling winds,

And odors rapt from remote Paradise?

Thy sense is clogged with dull mortality:

Open thine eyes and see."

I looked, but not

Upon his face, for it was wonderful

With its exceeding brightness, and the light

Of the great Angel Mind which looked from out

The starry glowing of his restless eyes.

I felt my soul grow mighty, and my spirit

With supernatural excitation bound

Within me, and my mental eye grew large

With such a vast circumference of thought,

That in my vanity I seemed to stand

Upon the outward verge and bound alone

Of full beatitude. Each failing sense,

As with a momentary flash of light, Grew thrillingly distinct and keen. I saw

The smallest grain that dappled the dark earth,

The indistinctest atom in deep air, The Moon's white cities, and the opal width

Of her small glowing lakes, her silver heights

Unvisited with dew of vagrant cloud, And the unsounded, undescended depth

Of her black hollows. The clear galaxy

Shorn of its hoary lustre, wonderful, Distinct and vivid with sharp points

of light, Blaze within blaze, an unimagined depth

And harmony of planet-girded suns And moon-encircled planets, wheel in

wheel, Arched the wan sapphire. Nay — the

hum of men Or other things talking in unknown

tongues, And notes of busy life in distant

worlds Beat like a far wave on my anxious

ear, A maze of piercing, trackless, thrilling

thoughts, Involving and embracing each with

each, Rapid as fire, inextricably linked,

Expanding momentarily with every sight And sound which struck the palpi-

tating sense, The issue of strong impulse, hurried

through The riven rapt brain; as when in some

large lake From pressure of descendent crags,

which lapse Disjointed, crumbling from their par-

ent slope At slender interval, the level calm

Is ridged with restless and increasing spheres

Which break upon each other, each th' effect

Of separate impulse, but more fleet and strong

Than its precursor, till the eye in vain

Amid the wild unrest of swimming shade

Dappled with hollow and alternate rise

Of interpenetrated arc, would scan

Definite round.

I know not if I shape

These things with accurate similitude From visible objects, for but dimly

now, Less vivid than a half-forgotten dream,

The memory of that mental excellence

Comes o'er me, and it may be Ientine

The indecision of my present mind

With its past clearness, yet it seems
to me

As even then the torrent of quick
thought

Absorbed me from the nature of itself
With its own fleetness. Where is he,
that borne

Adown the sloping of an arrowy
stream,

Could link his shallop to the fleeting
edge,

And muse midway with philosophic
calm

Upon the wondrous laws which regu-
late

The fierceness of the bounding ele-
ment?

My thoughts which long had grov-
elled in the slime

Of this dull world, like dusky worms
which house

Beneath unshaken waters, but at once
Upon some earth-awakening day of

Spring

Do pass from gloom to glory, and
aloft

Winnow the purple, bearing on both
sides

Double display of star-lit wings, which
burn

Fan-like and fibred with intensest
bloom;

Even so my thoughts erewhile so low,
now felt

Unutterable buoyancy and strength
To bear them upward through the

trackless fields

Of undefined existence far and free.

Then first within the South me-
thought I saw

A wilderness of spires, and crystal pile
Of rampart upon rampart, dome on

dome,

Illimitable range of battlement
On battlement, and the Imperial

height

Of canopy o'er-canopied.

Behind
In diamond light up spring the daz-
zling peaks

Of Pyramids, as far surpassing earth's
As heaven than earth is fairer. Each

aloft

Upon his narrowed eminence bore
globes

Of wheeling suns, or stars, or sem-
blances

Of either, showering circular abyss
Of radiance. But the glory of the

place

Stood out a pillared front of burnished
gold,

Interminably high, if gold it were
Or metal more ethereal, and beneath

Two doors of blinding brilliance, where
no gaze

Might rest, stood open, and the eye
could scan,

Through length of porch and valve
and boundless hall,

Part of a throne of fiery flame, where-
from

The snowy skirting of a garment
hung,

And glimpse of multitude of multi-
tudes

That ministered around it — if I saw
These things distinctly, for my human

brain

Staggered beneath the vision, and
thick night

Came down upon my eyelids, and I
fell.

With ministering hand he raised me
up:

Then with a mournful and ineffable
smile,

Which but to look on for a moment
filled

My eyes with irresistible sweet tears,
In accents of majestic melody,

Like a swollen river's gushings in still
night

Mingled with floating music, thus he
spake:

"There is no mightier Spirit than
I to sway

The heart of man; and teach him to
attain

By shadowing forth the Unattainable;
And step by step to scale that mighty

stair

Whose landing-place is wrapt about
with clouds

Of glory of heaven.¹ With earliest
light of Spring,

And in the glow of fallow Summer-
tide,

And in red Autumn when the winds
are wild

With gambols, and when full-voiced
Winter roofs

The headland with inviolate white
snow,

I play about his heart a thousand
ways,

Visit his eyes with visions, and his
ears

With harmonies of wind and wave and
wood,—

Of winds which tell of waters, and of
waters

Betraying the close kisses of the
wind—

And win him unto me: and few there
be

So gross of heart who have not felt
and known

A higher than they see: they with
dim eyes

¹ "Be ye perfect, even as your father in
heaven is perfect."

Behold me darkling. Lo! I have
 given thee
 To understand my presence, and to
 feel
 My fulness: I have filled thy lips
 with power.
 I have raised thee nigher to the
 spheres of heaven,
 Man's first, last home: and thou with
 ravished sense
 Listenest the lordly music flowing
 from
 The illimitable years. I am the
 Spirit,
 The permeating life which courseth
 through
 All th' intricate and labyrinthine
 veins
 Of the great vine of Fable, which,
 outspread
 With growth of shadowing leaf and
 clusters rare,
 Reacheth to every corner under
 heaven,
 Deep-rooted in the living soil of
 truth;
 So that men's hopes and fears take
 refuge in
 The fragrance of its complicated
 glooms,
 And cool impleached twilights. Child
 of man,
 Seest thou yon river, whose translucent
 wave,
 Forth issuing from the darkness, wind-
 eth through
 The argent streets o' the city, imaging
 The soft inversion of her tremulous
 domes,
 Her gardens frequent with the stately
 palm,
 Her pagods hung with music of sweet
 bells,
 Her obelisks of rangéd chrysolite,
 Minarets and towers? Lo! how he
 passeth by,
 And gulphs himself in sands, as not
 enduring
 To carry through the world those
 waves, which bore
 The reflex of my city in their depths.
 Oh city: oh latest throne! where I
 was raised
 To be a mystery of loveliness
 Unto all eyes, the time is well-nigh
 come.
 When I must render up this glorious
 home
 To keen Discovery; soon yon brilliant
 towers
 Shall darken with the waving of her
 wand;
 Darken and shrink and shiver into
 huts,
 Black specks amid a waste of dreary
 sand,

Low-built, mud-walled, barbarian set-
 tlements.

How changed from this fair city!"

Thus far the Spirit,
 Then parted heaven-ward on the
 wing: and I

Was left alone on Calpe, and the moon
 Had fallen from the night, and all was
 dark!

THE "HOW" AND THE "WHY."

?

I AM any man's suitor,
 If any will be my tutor:
 Some say this life is pleasant,
 Some think it speedeth fast,
 In time there is no present,
 In eternity no future,
 In eternity no past.
 We laugh, we cry, we are born, we die,
 Who will riddle me the *how* and the
why?

The bulrush nods unto its brother.
 The wheatears whisper to each other:
 What is it they say? what do they
 there?

Why two and two make four? why
 round is not square?

Why the rock stands still, and the
 light clouds fly?

Why the heavy oak groans, and the
 white willows sigh?

Why deep is not high, and high is not
 deep?

Whether we wake, or whether we
 sleep?

Whether we sleep, or whether we die?
 How you are you? why I am I?
 Who will riddle me the *how* and the
why?

The world is somewhat; it goes on
 somehow:

But what is the meaning of *then* and
now?

I feel there is something; but how
 and what?

I know there is somewhat: but what
 and why?

I cannot tell if that somewhat be I.

The little bird pipeth — "why?
 why?"

In the summer woods when the sun
 falls low,

And the great bird sits on the opposite
 bough,

And stares in his face, and shouts
 "how? how?"

And the black owl scuds down the
 mellow twilight,

And chants "how? how?" the whole
 of the night.

Why the life goes when the blood is
spilt ?

What the life is ? where the soul
may lie ?

Why a church is with a steeple built :
And a house with a chimney-pot ?

Who will riddle me the how and the
what ?

Who will riddle me the what and
the why ?

THE BURIAL OF LOVE.

His eyes in eclipse,
Palecold his lips,
The light of his hopes unfed,
Mute his tongue,
His bow unstrung
With the tears he hath shed,
Backward drooping his graceful head,
Love is dead :
His last arrow is sped ;
He hath not another dart ;
Go — carry him to his dark deathbed ;
Bury him in the cold, cold heart —
Love is dead.

Oh, truest love ! art thou forlorn,
And unrevenged ? thy pleasant
wiles
Forgotten, and thine innocent
joy ?
Shall hollowhearted apathy,
The cruelest form of perfect scorn,
With languor of most hateful
smiles,
For ever write,
In the withered light
Of the tearless eye,
An epitaph that all may spy ?
No ! sooner she herself shall die.

For her the showers shall not fall,
Nor the round sun shine that shineth
to all ;
Her light shall into darkness
change ;
For her the green grass shall not
spring,
Nor the rivers flow, nor the sweet
birds sing,
Till love have his full revenge.

TO ———.

SAINTED Juliet ! dearest name !
If to love be life alone,
Divinest Juliet,
I love thee, and live ; and yet
Love unreturned is like the fragrant
flame
Folding the slaughter of the sacrifice
Offered to gods upon an altar-
throne ;

My heart is lighted at thine eyes,
Changed into fire, and blown about
with sighs.

SONG.

I.

I' THE glooming light
Of middle night
So cold and white,
Worn Sorrow sits by the moaning
wave,
Beside her are laid
Her mattock and spade,
For she had half dived her own deep
grave.
Alone she is there :
The white clouds drizzle : her hair
falls loose.
Her shoulders are bare ;
Her tears are mixed with the beaded
dews.

II.

Death standeth by ;
She will not die ;
With glazed eye
She looks at her grave : she cannot
sleep ;
Ever alone
She maketh her moan :
She cannot speak : she can only weep,
For she will not hope.
The thick snow falls on her flake by
flake,
The dull wave mourns down
the slope,
The world will not change, and her
heart will not break.

SONG.

I.

THE lintwhite and the throstlecock
Have voices sweet and clear ;
All in the blooméd May.
They from the blosmy brere
Call to the fleeting year,
If that he would them hear
And stay.
Alas ! that one so beautiful
Should have so dull an ear.

II.

Fair year, fair year, thy children call.
But thou art deaf as death ;
All in the blooméd May.
When thy light perisheth
That from thee issueth,
Our life evanisheth :
Oh ! stay.
Alas ! that lips so cruel-dumb
Should have so sweet a breath ?

III.

Fair year, with brows of royal love
 Thou comest, as a king,
 All in the blooméd May.
 Thy golden largess fling,
 And longer hear us sing;
 Though thou art fleet of wing,
 Yet stay.
 Alas! that eyes so full of light
 Should be so wandering!

IV.

Thy locks are all of sunny sheen
 In rings of gold yronne,¹
 All in the blooméd May.
 We pri'thee pass not on;
 If thou dost leave the sun,
 Delight is with thee gone.
 Oh! stay.
 Thou art the fairest of thy feres.
 We pri'thee pass not on.

SONG.

I.

EVERY day hath its night;
 Every night its morn:
 Thorough dark and bright
 Wingéd hours are born;
 Ah! welaway!
 Seasons flower and fade;
 Golden calm and storm
 Mingle day by day.
 There is no bright form
 Doth not cast a shade —
 Ah! welaway!

II.

When we laugh, and our mirth
 Apes the happy vein,
 We're so kin to earth,
 Pleasaunce fathers pain —
 Ah! welaway!
 Madness laugheth loud:
 Laughter bringeth tears:
 Eyes are worn away
 Till the end of fears
 Cometh in the shroud,
 Ah! welaway!

III.

All is change, woe or weal;
 Joy is Sorrow's brother;
 Grief and gladness steal
 Symbols of each other;
 Ah! welaway!
 Larks in heaven's cope
 Sing: the culvers mourn
 All the livelong day.
 Be not all forlorn:
 Let us weep in hope —
 Ah! welaway!

¹ "His crispèd hair in ringis was yronne."
 — CHAUCER, *King's Tale*.

HERO TO LEANDER.

Oh go not yet, my love,
 The night is dark and vast;
 The white moon is hid in her heaven
 above,
 And the waves climb high and
 fast.
 Oh! kiss me, kiss me, once again,
 Lest thy kiss should be the last.
 Oh kiss me ere we part;
 Grow closer to my heart.
 My heart is warmer surely than the
 bosom of the main.
 O joy! O bliss of blisses!
 My heart of hearts art thou.
 Come bathe me with thy kisses,
 My eyelids and my brow.
 Hark how the wild rain hisses,
 And the loud sea roars below.

Thy heart beats through thy rosy
 limbs,
 So gladly doth it stir;
 Thine eye in drops of gladness
 swims.
 I have bathed thee with the pleas-
 ant myrrh;
 Thy locks are dripping balm;
 Thou shalt not wander hence to-
 night,
 I'll stay thee with my kisses.
 To-night the roaring brine
 Will rend thy golden tresses;
 The ocean with the morrow light
 Will be both blue and calm;
 And the billow will embrace thee with
 a kiss as soft as mine.

No Western odors wander
 On the black and foaming sea,
 And when thou art dead, Leander,
 My soul must follow thee!
 Oh go not yet, my love,
 Thy voice is sweet and low;
 The deep salt wave breaks in above
 Those marble steps below.
 The turretstairs are wet
 That lead into the sea.
 Leander! go not yet.
 The pleasant stars have set:
 Oh! go not, go not yet,
 Or I will follow thee.

THE MYSTIC.

ANGELS have talked with him, and
 showed him thrones:
 Ye knew him not; he was not one of
 ye,
 Ye scorned him with an undiscerning
 scorn:
 Ye could not read the marvel in his
 eye,
 The still serene abstraction: he hath
 felt

The vanities of after and before ;
 Albeit, his spirit and his secret heart
 The stern experiences of converse
 lives,
 The linked woes of many a fiery
 change
 Had purified, and chastened, and
 made free.
 Always there stood before him, night
 and day,
 Of wayward varycolored circumstance
 The imperishable presences serene,
 Colossal, without form, or sense, or
 sound,
 Dim shadows but unwaning presences
 Fourfaced to four corners of the sky :
 And yet again, three shadows, front-
 ing one,
 One forward, one respectant, three
 but one ;
 And yet again, again and evermore,
 For the two first were not, but only
 seemed,
 One shadow in the midst of a great
 light,
 One reflex from eternity on time,
 One mighty countenance of perfect
 calm,
 Awful with most invariable eyes.
 For him the silent congregated hours,
 Daughters of time, divinely tall, be-
 neath
 Severe and youthful brows, with shin-
 ing eyes
 Smiling a godlike smile (the innocent
 light
 Of earliest youth pierced through
 and through with all
 Keen knowledges of low-embowed eld)
 Upheld, and ever hold aloft the cloud
 Which droops lowhung on either gate
 of life,
 Both birth and death : he in the cen-
 tre fixt,
 Saw far on each side through the
 grated gates
 Most pale and clear and lovely dis-
 tances.
 He often lying broad awake, and yet
 Remaining from the body, and apart
 In intellect and power and will, hath
 heard
 Time flowing in the middle of the
 night,
 And all things creeping to a day of
 doom.
 How could ye know him ? Ye were
 yet within
 The narrower circle : he had wellnigh
 reached
 The last, which with a region of white
 flame,
 Pure without heat, into a larger air
 Upburning, and an ether of black
 blue,
 Investeth and ingirds all other lives.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

I.

VOICE of the summerwind,
 Joy of the summerplain,
 Life of the summerhours,
 Carol clearly, bound along.
 No Tithon thou as poets feign
 (Shame fall 'em they are deaf and
 blind),
 But an insect lithe and strong,
 Bowing the seeded summer flowers.
 Prove their falsehood and thy quar-
 rel,
 Vaulting on thine airy feet.
 Clap thy shielded sides and carol,
 Carol clearly, chirrup sweet.
 Thou art a mailed warrior in youth
 and strength complete ;
 Armed cap-a-pie
 Full fair to see ;
 Unknowing fear,
 Undreading loss,
 A gallant cavalier,
Sans peur et sans reproche,
 In sunlight and in-shadow,
 The Bayard of the meadow.

II.

I would dwell with thee,
 Merry grasshopper,
 Thou art so glad and free,
 And as light as air ;
 Thou hast no sorrow or tears,
 Thou hast no compt of years,
 No withered immortality,
 But a short youth sunny and free.
 Carol clearly, bound along,
 Soon thy joy is over,
 A summer of loud song,
 And slumbers in the clover.
 What hast thou to do with evil
 In thine hour of love and revel,
 In thy heat of summer pride,
 Pushing the thick roots aside
 Of the singing floweréd grasses,
 That brush thee with their silken
 tresses ?
 What hast thou to do with evil,
 Shooting, singing, ever springing
 In and out the emerald glooms,
 Ever leaping, ever singing,
 Lighting on the golden blooms ?

LOVE, PRIDE, AND FORGET-
FULNESS.

ERE yet my heart was sweet Love's
 tomb,
 Love labored honey busily.
 I was the hive, and Love the bee,
 My heart the honeycomb.
 One very dark and chilly night
 Pride came beneath and held a light.

The cruel vapors went through all,
 Sweet Love was withered in his cell;
 Pride took Love's sweets, and by a
 spell
 Did change them into gall;
 And Memory, though fed by Pride,
 Did wax so thin on gall,
 Awhile she scarcely lived at all.
 What marvel that she died?

CHORUS.

IN AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA, WRITTEN
 VERY EARLY.

The varied earth, the moving heaven,
 The rapid waste of roving sea,
 The fountain-pregnant mountains
 riven
 To shapes of wildest anarchy,
 By secret fire and midnight storms
 That wander round their windy
 cones,
 The subtle life, the countless forms
 Of living things, the wondrous
 tones
 Of man and beast are full of
 strange
 Astonishment and boundless
 change

The day, the diamonded night,
 The echo, feeble child of sound,
 The heavy thunder's griding might,
 The herald lightning's starry bound,
 The vocal spring of bursting bloom,
 The naked summer's glowing birth,
 The troublous autumn's sallow gloom,
 The hoarhead winter paving earth
 With sheeny white, are full of
 strange
 Astonishment and boundless
 change.

Each sun which from the centre flings
 Grand music and redundant fire,
 The burning belts, the mighty rings,
 The murm'rous planets' rolling
 choir,
 The globefilled arch that, cleaving air,
 Lost in its own effulgence sleeps,
 The lawless comets as they glare,
 And thunder through the sapphire
 deeps
 In wayward strength, are full of
 strange
 Astonishment and boundless
 change.

LOST HOPE.

You cast to ground the hope which
 once was mine:
 But did the while your harsh decree
 deplore,

Embalming with sweet tears the
 vacant shrine,
 My heart, where Hope had been
 and was no more.

So on an oaken sprout
 A goodly acorn grew;
 But winds from heaven shook the
 acorn out,
 And filled the cup with dew.

THE TEARS OF HEAVEN.

HEAVEN weeps above the earth all
 night till morn,
 In darkness weeps as all ashamed to
 weep,
 Because the earth hath made her state
 forlorn
 With self-wrought evil of unnum-
 bered years,
 And doth the fruit of her dishonor
 reap.
 And all the day heaven gathers back
 her tears
 Into her own blue eyes so clear and
 deep,
 And showering down the glory of
 lightsome day,
 Smiles on the earth's worn brow to
 win her if she may.

LOVE AND SORROW.

O MAIDEN, fresher than the first green
 leaf
 With which the fearful springtide
 flecks the lea,
 Weep not, Almeida, that I said to thee
 That thou hast half my heart, for bit-
 ter grief
 Doth hold the other half in sovran-
 ty.
 Thou art my heart's sun in love's
 crystalline:
 Yet on both sides at once thou canst
 not shine:
 Thine is the bright side of my heart,
 and thine
 My heart's day, but the shadow of my
 heart,
 Issue of its own substance, my heart's
 night
 Thou canst not lighten even with *thy*
 light,
 Allpowerful in beauty as thou art.
 Almeida, if my heart were substance-
 less,
 Then might thy rays pass through to
 the other side,
 So swiftly, that they nowhere would
 abide,
 But lose themselves in utter empti-
 ness.

Half-light, half-shadow, let my spirit
sleep;
They never learned to love who never
knew to weep.

TO A LADY SLEEPING.

O THOU whose fringed lids I gaze upon,
Through whose dim brain the wingéd
dreams are borne,
Unroof the shrines of clearest vision,
In honor of the silver-fleckéd morn;
Long hath the white wave of the vir-
gin light
Driven back the billow of the dream-
ful dark.
Thou all unwittingly prolongest night,
Though long ago listening the poiséd
lark,
With eyes dropt downward through
the blue serene,
Over heaven's parapet the angels lean.

SONNET.

COULD I outwear my present state of
woe
With one brief winter, and indue i' the
spring
Hues of fresh youth, and mightily
outgrow
The wan dark coil of faded suffer-
ing —
Forth in the pride of beauty issuing
A sheeny snake, the light of vernal
bowers,
Moving his crest to all sweet plots
of flowers
And watered valleys where the young
birds sing;
Could I thus hope my lost delight's
renewing,
I straightly would command the tears
to creep
From my charged lids; but inwardly
I weep;
Some vital heat as yet my heart is
woeing:
That to itself hath drawn the frozen
rain
From my cold eyes, and melted it
again.

SONNET.

THOUGH Night hath climbed her peak
of highest noon,
And bitter blasts the screaming au-
tumn whirl,
All night through archways of the
bridgéd pearl,
And portals of pure silver, walks the
moon.

Walk on, my soul, nor crouch to agony,
Turn cloud to light, and bitterness to
joy,
And dross to gold with glorious
alchemy,
Basing thy throne above the world's
annoy.
Reign thou above the storms of sor-
row and ruth
That roar beneath; unshaken peace
hath won thee;
So shalt thou pierce the woven glooms
of truth;
So shall the blessing of the meek be
on thee;
So in thine hour of dawn, the body's
youth,
An honorable eld shall come upon
thee.

SONNET.

SHALL the hag Evil die with child
of Good,
Or propagate again her loathéd kind,
Thronging the cells of the diseased
mind,
Hateful with hanging cheeks, a with-
ered brood,
Though hourly pastured on the salient
blood?
Oh! that the wind which bloweth cold
or heat
Would shatter and o'erbear the bra-
zen beat
Of their broad vans, and in the soli-
tude
Of middle space confound them, and
blow back
Their wild cries down their cavern
throats, and slake
With points of blastborne hail their
heated eyne!
So their wan limbs no more might
come between
The moon and the moon's reflex in
the night,
Nor blot with floating shades the solar
light.

SONNET.

THE pallid thunderstricken sigh for
gain,
Down an ideal stream they ever float,
And sailing on Pactolus in a boat,
Drown soul and sense, while wistfully
they strain
Weak eyes upon the glistening sands
that robe
The understream. The wise, could
he behold
Cathedralléd caverns of thickribbéd
gold
And branching silvers of the central
globe,

Would marvel from so beautiful a
sight
How scorn and ruin, pain and hate
could flow.
But Hatred in a gold cave sits below;
Pleached with her hair, in mail of
argent light
Shot into gold, a snake her forehead
clips,
And skins the color from her trem-
bling lips.

LOVE.

I.

Thou, from the first, unborn, undy-
ing love,
Albeit we gaze not on thy glories near,
Before the face of God didst breathe
and move,
Though night and pain and ruin and
death reign here.
Thou foldest, like a golden atmos-
phere,
The very throne of the eternal God:
Passing through thee the edicts of his
fear
Are mellowed into music, borne abroad
By the loud winds, though they up-
rend the sea,
Even from its central deeps: thine
empire
Is over all; thou wilt not brook
eclipse;
Thou goest and returnest to His lips
Like lightning: thou dost ever brood
above
The silence of all hearts, unutterable
Love.

II.

To know thee is all wisdom, and old
age
Is but to know thee: dimly we behold
thee
Athwart the veils of evils which infold
thee.
We beat upon our aching hearts in
rage;
We cry for thee; we deem the world
thy tomb.
As dwellers in lone planets look upon
The mighty disk of their majestic sun,
Hollowed in awful chasms of wheel-
ing gloom,
Making their day dim, so we gaze on
thee.
Come, thou of many crowns, white-
robed love,
Oh! rend the veil in twain: all men
adore thee;
Heaven crieth after thee; earth wait-
eth for thee;
Breathe on thy wingéd throne, and it
shall move
In music and in light o'er land and sea.

III.

And now—methinks I gaze upon
thee now,
As on a serpent in his agonies
Awestricken Indians; what time laid
low
And crushing the thick fragrant reeds
he lies,
When the new year warmbreathed on
the Earth,
Waiting to light him with her pur-
ple skies,
Calls to him by the fountain to uprise.
Already with the pangs of a new birth
Strain the hot spheres of his con-
vulséd eyes,
And in his writhings awful hues begin
To wander down his sable-sheeny
sides,
Like light on troubled waters: from
within
Anon he rusheth forth with merry din,
And in him light and joy and strength
abides;
And from his brows a crown of living
light
Looks through the thickstemmed
woods by day and night.

ENGLISH WAR-SONG.

Who fears to die? Who fears
to die!
Is there any here who fears to die?
He shall find what he fears; and none
shall grieve
For the man who fears to die;
But the withering scorn of the many
shall cleave
To the man who fears to die.
CHORUS.—Shout for England!
Ho! for England!
George for England!
Merry England!
England for aye!

The hollow at heart shall crouch
forlorn,
He shall eat the bread of common
scorn;
It shall be steeped in the salt, salt tear,
Shall be steeped in his own salt
tear:
Far better, far better he never were
born
Than to shame merry England
here.
CHORUS.—Shout for England! etc.

There standeth our ancient
enemy;
Hark! he shouteth—the ancient
enemy!
On the ridge of the hill his banners rise;

They stream like fire in the skies;
Hold up the Lion of England on high
Till it dazzle and blind his eyes.
CHORUS. — Shout for England! etc.

Come along! we alone of the
earth are free;
The child in our cradles is bolder
than he;
For where is the heart and strength of
slaves?
Oh! where is the strength of
slaves?
He is weak! we are strong: he a
slave, we are free.
Come along! we will dig their
graves.
CHORUS. — Shout for England! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy,
Will he dare to battle with the
free?
Spur along! spur again! charge to
the fight:
Charge! charge to the fight!
Hold up the Lion of England on high!
Shout for God and our right!
CHORUS. — Shout for England! etc.

NATIONAL SONG.

THERE is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be;
There are no hearts like English
hearts,
Such hearts of oak as they be.
There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be;
There are no men like Englishmen,
So tall and bold as they be.

CHORUS.

For the French the Pope may shrive
'em,
For the devil a whit we heed 'em:
As for the French, God speed 'em
Unto their heart's desire,
And the merry devil drive 'em
Through the water and the fire.

FULL CHORUS.

Our glory is our freedom,
We lord it o'er the sea;
We are the sons of freedom,
We are free.

There is no land like England,
Where'er the light of day be;
There are no wives like English wives,
So fair and chaste as they be.
There is no land like England,
Where'er the light of day be;

There are no maids like English maids,
So beautiful as they be.
CHORUS. — For the French, etc.

DUALISMS.

Two bees within a crystal flowerbell
rockéd,
Hum a lodelay to the westwind at
noontide.
Both alike, they buzz together,
Both alike, they hum together,
Through and through the floweréd
heather.
Where in a creeping cove the wave
unshockéd
Lays itself calm and wide.
Over a stream two birds of glanc-
ing feather
Do woo each other, carolling
together.
Both alike, they glide together,
Side by side;
Both alike, they sing together,
Arching blue-glosséd necks beneath
the purple weather.

Two children lovelier than Love adown
the lea are singing,
As they gambol, lilygarlands ever
stringing:
Both in blossomwhite silk are
frockéd:
Like, unlike, they roam together
Under a summervault of golden
weather;
Like, unlike, they sing together
Side by side,
MidMay's darling golden
lockéd,
Summer's tanling diamond
eyéd.

Οἱ ῥέοντες.

I.

ALL thoughts, all creeds, all dreams
are true,
All visions wild and strange;
Man is the measure of all truth
Unto himself. All truth is change,
All men do walk in sleep, and all
Have faith in that they dream:
For all things are as they seem to all,
And all things flow like a stream.

II.

There is no rest, no calm, no pause,
Nor good nor ill, nor light nor
shade,
Nor essence nor eternal laws:
For nothing is, but all is made.
But if I dream that all these are,

They are to me for that I dream;
For all things are as they seem to all,
And all things flow like a stream.

Argal — this very opinion is only
true relatively to the flowing philosophers.

TO —

I.

ALL good things have not kept aloof,
Nor wandered into other ways;
I have not lacked thy mild reproof,
Nor golden largess of thy praise,
But life is full of weary days.

II.

Shake hands, my friend, across the
brink
Of that deep grave to which I go.
Shake hands once more: I cannot
sink
So far — far down, but I shall know
Thy voice, and answer from below.

III.

When, in the darkness over me,
The four-handed mole shall scrape,
Plant thou no dusky cypress tree,
Nor wreathe thy cap with doleful
crape,
But pledge me in the flowing grape.

IV.

And when the sappy field and wood
Grow green beneath the showery
gray,
And rugged barks begin to bud,
And through damp holts, newflushed
with May,
Ring sudden laughter of the Jay;

V.

Then let wise Nature work her will,
And on my clay the darnels grow.
Come only when the days are still,
And at my headstone whisper low,
And tell me if the woodbines blow

VI.

If thou art blest, my mother's smile
Undimmed, if bees are on the wing:
Then cease, my friend, a little while,
That I may hear the throstle sing
His bridal song, the boast of spring.

VII.

Sweet as the noise in parched plains
Of bubbling wells that fret the
stones

(If any sense in me remains),
Thy words will be; thy cheerful
tones
As welcome to my crumbling bones.

SONNETS.

I.

O BEAUTY, passing beauty! sweetest
Sweet!
How canst thou let me waste my
youth in sighs?
I only ask to sit beside thy feet.
Thou knowest I dare not look into
thine eyes.
Might I but kiss thy hand! I dare
not fold
My arms about thee — scarcely
dare to speak.
And nothing seems to me so wild and
bold,
As with one kiss to touch thy
blessed cheek.
Methinks if I should kiss thee, no
control
Within the thrilling brain could
keep afloat
The subtle spirit. Even while I
spoke,
The bare word Kiss hath made my
inner soul
To tremble like a lutestring, ere the
note
Hath melted in the silence that it
broke.

II.

But were I loved, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of
the earth,
And range of evil between death and
birth,
That I should fear, — if I were loved
by thee?
All the inner, all the outer world of
pain
Clear Love would pierce and cleave,
if thou wert mine,
As I have heard that, somewhere in
the main,
Fresh-water springs come up through
bitter brine.
'Twere joy, not fear, clasped hand-in-
hand with thee,
To wait for death — mute — careless
of all ills,
Apart upon a mountain, though the
surge
Of some new deluge from a thousand
hills
Flung leagues of roaring foam into
the gorge
Below us, as far on as eye could see.

THE HESPERIDES.

Hesperus and his daughters three,
That sing about the golden tree. — *COMUS.*

THE Northwind fall'n, in the new-
starrèd night
Zidonian Hanno, voyaging beyond
The hoary promotory of Soloë
Past Thymiaterion, in calmèd bays,
Between the southern and the western
Horn,
Heard neither warbling of the nightin-
gale,
Nor melody of the Libyan lotus flute
Blown seaward from the shore; but
from a slope
That ran bloombright into the Atlan-
tic blue,
Beneath a highland leaning down a
weight
Of cliffs, and zoned below with cedar
shade,
Came voices, like the voices in a
dream,
Continuous, till he reached the outer
sea.

SONG.

I.

The golden apple, the golden apple,
the hallowed fruit,
Guard it well, guard it warily,
Singing airily,
Standing about the charmèd root.
Round about all is mute,
As the snowfield on the mountain-
peaks,
As the sandfield at the mountain-foot.
Crocodiles in briny creeks
Sleep and stir not: all is mute.
If ye sing not, if ye make false meas-
ure,
We shall lose eternal pleasure,
Worth eternal want of rest.
Laugh not loudly: watch the treasure
Of the wisdom of the West.
In a corner wisdom whispers. Five
and three
(Let it not be preached abroad) make
an awful mystery.
For the blossom unto threefold music
bloweth;
Evermore it is born anew;
And the sap to threefold music floweth,
From the root
Drawn in the dark,
Up to the fruit,
Creeping under the fragrant bark,
Liquid gold, honeysweet, thro' and
thro'.
Keen-eyed Sisters, singing airily,
Looking warily
Every way,
Guard the apple night and day,
Lest one from the East come and take
it away.

II.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch,
watch, ever and aye,
Looking under silver hair with a
silver eye.
Father, twinkle not thy steadfast sight;
Kingdoms lapse, and climates change,
and races die;
Honor comes with mystery;
Hoarded wisdom brings delight.
Number, tell them over and number
How many the mystic fruit tree holds
Lest the redcombed dragon slumber
Rolled together in purple folds.
Look to him, father, lest he wink, and
the golden apple be stol'n away,
For his ancient heart is drunk with
overwatchings night and day,
Round about the hallowed fruit tree
curled —
Sing away, sing aloud evermore in the
wind, without stop,
Lest his scaled eyelid drop,
For he is older than the world.
If he waken, we waken,
Rapidly levelling eager eyes.
If he sleep, we sleep,
Dropping the eyelid over the eyes.
If the golden apple be taken,
The world will be overwise.
Five links, a golden chain, are we,
Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
Round about the golden tree.

III.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch,
watch, night and day,
Lest the old wound of the world be
healed,
The glory unsealed,
The golden apple stolén away,
And the ancient secret revealed.
Look from west to east along:
Father, old Himala weakens, Caucasus
is bold and strong.
Wandering waters unto wandering
waters call:
Let them clash together, foam and fall.
Out of watchings, out of wiles,
Comes the bliss of secret smiles.
All things are not told to all.
Half-round the mantling night is
drawn,
Purple fringed with even and dawn.
Hesper hateth Phosphor, evening
hateth morn.

IV.

Every flower and every fruit the re-
dolent breath
Of this warm sea wind ripeneth,
Arching the billow in his sleep;
But the land wind wandereth,
Broken by the highland-steep,
Two streams upon the violet deep;
For the western sun and the western
star,

And the low west wind, breathing afar,
 The end of day and beginning of night
 Make the apple holy and bright;
 Holy and bright, round and full, bright
 and blest,
 Mellowed in a land of rest;
 Watch it warily day and night;
 All good things are in the west.
 Till mid noon the cool east light
 Is shut out by the tall hillbrow;
 But when the fullfaced sunset yellowy
 Stays on the flowering arch of the
 bough,
 The luscious fruitage clustereth mel-
 lowly,
 Goldenkernelled, goldencored,
 Sunset-ripened above on the tree.
 The world is wasted with fire and
 sword,
 But the apple of gold hangs over the
 sea.
 Five links, a golden chain are we,
 Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
 Daughters three,
 Bound about
 The gnarled bole of the charmed tree.
 The golden apple, the golden apple,
 the hallowed fruit,
 Guard it well, guard it warily,
 Watch it warily,
 Singing airily,
 Standing about the charmed root.

NOTE TO ROSALIND.

Perhaps the following lines may be allowed to stand as a separate poem; originally they made part of the text, where they were manifestly improper. See p. 23.

Mr Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 Bold, subtle, careless Rosalind,
 Is one of those who know no strife
 Of inward woe or outward fear;
 To whom the slope and stream of Life,
 The life before, the life behind,
 In the ear, from far and near,
 Chimeth musically clear.
 My falconhearted Rosalind,
 Fullsailed before a vigorous wind,
 Is one of those who cannot weep
 For others' woes, but overleap
 All the petty shocks and fears
 That trouble life in early years,
 With a flash of frolic scorn
 And keen delight, that never falls
 Away from freshness, selfupborne
 With such gladness as, whenever
 The freshflushing springtime calls
 To the flooding waters cool.
 Young fishes, on an April morn,
 Up and down a rapid river,
 Leap the little waterfalls
 That sing into the pebbled pool.
 My happy falcon, Rosalind,
 Hath daring fancies of her own,

Fresh as the dawn before the day,
 Fresh as the early seasmell blown
 Through vineyards from an inland bay.
 My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 Because no shadow on you falls,
 Think you hearts are tennisballs,
 To play with, wanton Rosalind?

SONG.

Who can say
 Why To-day
 To-morrow will be yesterday?
 Who can tell
 Why to smell
 The violet, recalls the dewy prime
 Of youth and buried time?
 The cause is nowhere found in rhyme.

KATE.

I know her by her angry air,
 Her bright black eyes, her bright
 black hair,
 Her rapid laughers wild and shrill,
 As laughers of the woodpecker
 From the bosom of a hill.
 'Tis Kate—she sayeth what she will:
 For Kate hath an unbridled tongue,
 Clear as the twanging of a harp.
 Her heart is like a throbbing star.
 Kate hath a spirit ever strung
 Like a new bow, and bright and
 sharp
 As edges of the scymetar.
 Whence shall she take a fitting
 mate?
 For Kate no common love will
 feel;
 My woman-soldier, gallant Kate,
 As pure and true as blades of
 steel.

Kate saith "the world is void of
 might."
 Kate saith "the men are gilded
 flies."
 Kate snaps her fingers at my
 vows;
 Kate will not hear of lovers' sighs.
 I would I were an armed knight,
 Far famed for wellwon enterprise,
 And wearing on my swarthy
 brows
 The garland of new-wreathed em-
 prise;
 For in a moment I would pierce
 The blackest files of clanging fight,
 And strongly strike to left and right,
 In dreaming of my lady's eyes.
 Oh! Kate loves well the bold and
 fierce;
 But none are bold enough for Kate,
 She cannot find a fitting mate.

SONNET.

WRITTEN ON HEARING OF THE OUT-
BREAK OF THE POLISH INSUR-
RECTION.

Blow ye the trumpet, gather from
afar
The hosts to battle: be not bought
and sold.
Arise, brave Poles, the boldest of the
bold;
Break through your iron shackles —
fling them far.
O for those days of Piast, ere the
Czar
Grew to his strength among his deserts
cold;
When even to Moscow's cupolas were
rolled
The growing murmurs of the Polish
war!
Now must your noble anger blaze out
more
Than when from Sobieski, clan by
clan,
The Moslem myriads fell, and fled
before —
Than when Zamoysky smote the
Tartar Khan;
Than earlier, when on the Baltic
shore
Boleslas drove the Pomeranian.

O DARLING ROOM.

I.

O DARLING room, my heart's delight
Dear room, the apple of my sight,
With thy two couches soft and white,
There is no room so exquisite,
No little room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

II.

For I the Nonnenwerth have seen,
And Oberwinter's vineyards green,
Musical Lurlei; and between
The hills to Bingen have I been,
Bingen in Darmstadt, where the
Rhene
Curves toward Mentz, a woody scene.

III.

Yet never did there meet my sight,
In any town to left or right,
A little room so exquisite,
With two such couches, soft and
white;
Not any room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

TO CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

You did late review my lays,
Crusty Christopher;

You did mingle blame and praise,
Rusty Christopher.
When I learnt from whom it came,
I forgave you all the blame,
Musty Christopher;
I could *not* forgive the praise,
Fusty Christopher.

NO MORE.

OH sad *No More!* Oh sweet *No
More!*

Oh strange *No More!*
By a mossed brookbank on a stone
I smelt a wildweed flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with
tears.
Surely all pleasant things had gone
before,
Lowburied fathom deep beneath with
thee, *NO MORE!*

ANACREONTICS.

With roses muskybreathed,
And drooping daffodilly,
And silverleaved lily,
And ivy darkly-wreathed,
I wove a crown before her,
For her I love so dearly,
A garland for Lenora.
With a silken cord I bound it.
Lenora, laughing clearly
A light and thrilling laughter,
About her forehead wound it,
And loved me ever after.

A FRAGMENT.

WHERE is the Giant of the Sun, which
stood
In the midnight the glory of old Rhodes,
A perfect Idol with profulgent brows
Farsheening down the purple seas to
those
Who sailed from Mizraim underneath
the star
Named of the Dragon — and between
whose limbs
Of brassy vastness broadblown
Argosies
Drave into haven? Yet endure un-
scathed
Of changeful cycles the great Pyra-
mids
Broadbased amid the fleeting sands,
and sloped
Into the slumbrous summer noon; but
where,
Mysterious Egypt, are thine obelisks
Graven with gorgeous emblems un-
discerned?

Thy placid Sphinxes brooding o'er the Nile?
 Thy shadowing Idols in the solitudes,
 Awful Memnonian countenances calm
 Looking athwart the burning flats, far off
 Seen by the highnecked camel on the verge
 Journeying southward? Where are thy monuments
 Piled by the strong and sunborn Anakim
 Over their crowned brethren ON and OPH?
 Thy Memnon when his peaceful lips are kist
 With earliest rays, that from his mother's eyes
 Flow over the Arabian bay, no more
 Breathes low into the charmed ears of morn
 Clear melody flattering the crisped Nile
 By columned Thebes. Old Memphis hath gone down:
 The Pharoahs are no more: somewhere in death
 They sleep with staring eyes and gilded lips,
 Wrapped round with spiced cerements in old grots
 Rockhewn and sealed for ever.

SONNET.

ME my own fate to lasting sorrow doometh,
 Thy woes are birds of passage, transitory:
 Thy spirit, circled with a living glory,
 In summer still a summer joy resumeth.
 Alone my hopeless melancholy gloometh,
 Like a lone cypress, through the twilight hoary,
 From an old garden where no flower bloometh,
 One cypress on an island promontory.
 But yet my lonely spirit follows thine,
 As round the rolling earth night follows day:
 But yet thy lights on my horizon shine
 Into my night, when thou art far away
 I am so dark, alas! and thou so bright,
 When we two meet there's never perfect light.

SONNET.

CHECK every outflash, every ruder sally
 Of thought and speech; speak low and give up wholly
 Thy spirit to mild-minded melancholy;

This is the place. Through yonder poplar valley
 Below the blue-green river windeth slowly;
 But in the middle of the sombre valley
 The crisped waters whisper musically,
 And all the haunted place is dark and holy.
 The nightingale, with long and low preamble,
 Warbled from yonder knoll of solemn larches,
 And in and out the woodbine's flowery arches
 The summer midges wove their wanton gambol
 And all the white-stemmed pine-wood slept above—
 When in this valley first I told my love.

THE SKIPPING-ROPE.

SURE never yet was Antelope
 Could skip so lightly by.
 Stand off, or else my skipping-rope
 Will hit you in the eye.
 How lightly whirls the skipping-rope!
 How fairy-like you fly!
 Go, get you gone, you muse and mope—
 I hate that silly sigh.
 Nay, dearest, teach me how to hope,
 Or tell me how to die.
 There, take it, take my skipping-rope,
 And hang yourself thereby.

THE NEW TIMON AND THE POETS.

WE know him, out of Shakespeare's art,
 And those fine curses which he spoke;
 The old Timon, with his noble heart,
 That, strongly loathing, greatly broke.

So died the Old: here comes the New.
 Regard him: a familiar face:
 I thought we knew him: What, it's you,
 The padded man — that wears the stays —

Who killed the girls and thrilled the boys
 With dandy pathos when you wrote!
 A Lion, you, that made a noise,
 And shook a mane *en papillotes*.

And once you tried the Muses too;
 You failed, Sir: therefore now you turn,
 To fall on those who are to you
 As Captain is to Subaltern.

But men of long-enduring hopes,
And careless what this hour may
bring,
Can pardon little would-be POPES
And BRUMMELS, when they try to
sting.

An Artist, Sir, should rest in Art,
And waive a little of his claim;
To have the deep poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame.

But you, Sir, you are hard to please;
You never look but half content:
Nor like a gentleman at ease,
With moral breadth of tempera-
ment.

And what with spites and what with
fears,
You cannot let a body be:
It's always ringing in your ears,
"They call this man as good as *me*."

What profits now to understand
The merits of a spotless shirt —
A dapper boot — a little hand —
If half the little soul is dirt?

You talk of tinsel! why, we see
The old mark of rouge upon your
cheeks.

You prate of Nature! you are he
That spilt his life about the cliques.

A TIMON you! Nay, nay, for shame:
It looks too arrogant a jest —
The fierce old man — to take his name,
You bandbox. Off, and let him rest.

STANZAS.

WHAT time I wasted youthful hours,
One of the shining winged powers,
Show'd me vast cliffs with crown of
towers

As towards the gracious light I bow'd,
They seem'd high palaces and proud,
Hid now and then with sliding cloud.

He said, "The labor is not small;
Yet winds the pathway free to all:—
Take care thou dost not fear to fall!"

SONNET.

TO WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY.

FAREWELL, Macready, since to-night
we part,
Full-handed thunders often have
confest

Thy power, well-used to move the
public breast.

We thank thee with one voice, and
from the heart

Farewell, Macready; since this night
we part.

Go, take thine honors home: rank
with the best,

Garrick, and statelier Kemble, and
the rest

Who made a nation purer thro' their
art.

Thine is it, that our Drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless panto-
mime,

And those gilt gauds men-children
swarm to see.

Farewell, Macready; moral, grave,
sublime.

Our Shakespeare's bland and universal
eye

Dwells pleased, thro' twice a hun-
dred years, on thee.

BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN.

RISE, Britons, rise, if manhood be not
dead,

The world's last tempest darkens over-
head;

The Pope has bless'd him;

The Church caress'd him;

He triumphs; may be we shall stand
alone.

Britons, guard your own.

His ruthless host is bought with plun-
der'd gold,

By lying priests the peasants' votes
controll'd.

All freedom vanish'd,

The true men banish'd,

He triumphs; may be we shall stand
alone.

Britons, guard your own.

Peace-lovers we — sweet Peace we all
desire —

Peace-lovers we — but who can trust
a liar? —

Peace-lovers, haters

Of shameless traitors,

We hate not France, but this man's
heart of stone.

Britons, guard your own.

We hate not France, but France has
lost her voice.

This man is France, the man they call
her choice.

By tricks and spying,

By craft and lying,

And murder was her freedom over-
thrown.

Britons, guard your own.

"Vive l'Empereur" may follow bye
and bye;
"God save the Queen" is here a truer
cry.

God save the Nation,
The toleration,
And the free speech that makes a
Briton known.
Britons, guard your own.

Rome's dearest daughter now is cap-
tive France,
The Jesuit laughs, and reckoning on
his chance,
Would unrelenting,
Kill all dissenting,
Till we were left to fight for truth
alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Biscayan
tides,
To blow the battle from their oaken
sides.
Why waste they yonder
Their idle thunder?
Why stay they there to guard a
foreign throne?
Seamen, guard your own.

We were the best of marksmen long
ago,
We won old battles with our strength,
the bow.
Now practise, yeomen,
Like those bowmen,
Till your balls fly as their shafts have
flown.
Yeomen, guard your own.

His soldier-ridden Highness might in-
cline
To take Sardinia, Belgium, or the
Rhine:
Shall we stand idle,
Nor seek to bridle
His rude aggressions, till we stand
alone?
Make their cause your own.

Should he land here, and for one hour
prevail,
There must no man go back to bear
the tale:
No man to bear it —
Swear it! we swear it!
Although we fight the banded world
alone,
We swear to guard our own.

HANDS ALL ROUND.

FIRST drink a health, this solemn
night,
A health to England, every guest;
That man's the best cosmopolite

Who loves his native country best.
May Freedom's oak for ever live
With stronger life from day to day;
That man's the best Conservative
Who lops the mouldered branch
away.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink,
my friends,
And the great name of England,
round and round.

A health to Europe's honest men!
Heaven guard them from her
tyrants' jails!
From wronged Poerio's noisome den,
From ironed limbs and tortured
nails!

We curse the crimes of southern
kings,
The Russian whips and Austrian
rods —

We likewise have our evil things;
Too much we make our Ledgers,
Gods.

Yet hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To Europe's better health we drink,
my friends,
And the great name of England,
round and round!

What health to France, if France be
she,
Whom martial progress only
charms?

Yet tell her — better to be free
Than vanquish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city's flashing heats
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.
Why change the titles of your streets?
You fools, you'll want them all
again.

Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To France, the wiser France, we drink,
my friends,
And the great name of England,
round and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee and we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war's mad blast again be
blown,

Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with
ours.

Hands all round!
God the tyrants cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen of the West, my
friends,
And the great name of England,
round and round.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,
 When war against our freedom
 springs!
 O speak to Europe through your guns!
 They *can* be understood by kings.
 You must not mix our Queen with
 those
 That wish to keep their people
 fools;
 Our freedom's foemen are her foes,
 She comprehends the race she rules.
 Hands all round!
 God the tyrant's cause confound!
 To our dear kinsmen in the West, my
 friends,
 And the great name of England
 round and round.

THE WAR.

THERE is a sound of thunder afar,
 Storm in the South that darkens the
 day,
 Storm of battle and thunder of war,
 Well, if it do not roll our way.
 Form! form! Riflemen, form!
 Ready, be ready to meet the
 storm!
 Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen,
 form!

Be not deaf to the sound that warns!
 Be not gull'd by a despot's plea!
 Are figs of thistles, or grapes of
 thorns?
 How should a despot set men free?
 Form! form! Riflemen, form!
 Ready, be ready to meet the
 storm!
 Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen,
 form!

Let your Reforms for a moment go,
 Look to your butts and take good
 aims.

Better a rotten borough or so,
 Than a rotten fleet or a city in
 flames!

Form! form! Riflemen, form!
 Ready, be ready to meet the
 storm!
 Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen,
 form!

Form, be ready to do or die!
 Form in Freedom's name and the
 Queen's!

True, that we have a faithful ally,
 But only the Devil knows what he
 means.

Form! form! Riflemen, form!
 Ready, be ready to meet the
 storm!
 Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen,
 form!

1865-1866.

I stood on a tower in the wet,
 And New Year and Old Year met,
 And winds were roaring and blowing;
 And I said, "O years that meet in
 tears,
 Have ye aught that is worth the know-
 ing?
 Science enough and exploring,
 Wanderers coming and going,
 Matter enough for deploring,
 But aught that is worth the knowing?"
 Seas at my feet were flowing,
 Waves on the shingle pouring,
 Old Year roaring and blowing,
 And New Year blowing and roaring.

SONNET.

THERE are three things which fill my
 heart with sighs,
 And steep my soul in laughter (when
 I view
 Fair maiden-forms moving like melo-
 dies) —
 Dimples, roselips, and eyes of any hue.
 There are three things beneath the
 blessed skies
 For which I live — black eyes and
 brown and blue:
 I hold them all most dear; but oh!
 black eyes,
 I live and die, and only die in you.
 Of late such eyes looked at me —
 while I mused,
 At sunset, underneath a shadowy
 plane.
 In old Bayona nigh the southern
 sea —
 From an half-open lattice looked at
 me.
 I saw no more — only those eyes —
 confused
 And dazzled to the heart with glorious
 pain.

ADDITIONAL VERSES.

To "God Save the Queen!" written for the
 marriage of the Princess Royal of England
 with the Crown Prince of Prussia, Jan. 25,
 1858.

God bless our Prince and Bride!
 God keep their lands allied,
 God save the Queen!
 Clothe them with righteousness,
 Crown them with happiness,
 Them with all blessings bless,
 God save the Queen!

Fair fall this hallow'd hour,
 Farewell, our England's flower,
 God save the Queen!
 Farewell, first rose of May!
 Let both the peoples say,
 God bless thy marriage-day,
 God bless the Queen!

SONNET ON CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY.

THEREFORE your Halls, your ancient
Colleges,
Your portals statued with old kings
and queens,
Your gardens, myriad-volumed libra-
ries,
Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven
screens,
Your doctors, and your proctors, and
your deans
Shall not avail you, when the Day-
beam sports
New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion —
No!
Nor yet your solemn organ-pipes that
blow
Melodious thunders thro' your vacant
courts
At morn and eve — because your
manner sorts
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand
apart —
Because the lips of little children
preach
Against you, you that do profess to
teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the
heart.

LINES.

HERE often, when a child, I lay re-
clined,
I took delight in this locality.
Here stood the infant Ilion of the
mind,
And here the Grecian ships did
seem to be.
And here again I come, and only find
The drain-cut levels of the marshy
lea, —
Gray sandbanks, and pale sunsets, —
dreary wind,
Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy-
clouded sea!

THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY
BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA.¹

OCTOBER 25, 1854.

I.

THE charge of the gallant three hun-
dred, the Heavy Brigade! —

¹ The "three hundred" of the "Heavy Brigade" who made this famous charge were the Scots Greys and the second squadron of Inniskillens; the remainder of the "Heavy Brigade" subsequently dashing up to their support.

The "three" were Elliot, Scarlett's aide-de-camp, who had been riding by his side, and the trumpeter, and Shegog the orderly, who had been close behind him.

Down the hill, down the hill, thousands
of Russians,
Thousands of horsemen, drew to the
valley — and stay'd;
For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hun-
dred were riding by
When the points of the Russian lances
broke in on the sky;
And he call'd "Left wheel into line!"
and they wheel'd and obey'd.
Then he look'd at the host that had
halted he knew not why,
And he turn'd half round, and he bade
his trumpeter sound
To the charge, and he rode on ahead,
as he waved his blade
To the gallant three hundred whose
glory will never die —
"Follow," and up the hill, up the hill,
up the hill,
Follow'd the Heavy Brigade.

II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge,
and the might of the fight! —
Down the hill, slowly, thousands of
Russians
Drew to the valley, and halted at last
on the height,
With a wing push'd out to the left,
and a wing to the right —
But Scarlett was far on ahead, and he
dash'd up alone
Thro' the great gray slope of men,
And he wheel'd his sabre, he held his
own
Like an Englishman there and then;
And the three that were nearest him
follow'd with force,
Wedge themselves in between horse
and horse,
Fought for their lives in the narrow
gap they had made,
Four amid thousands; and up the hill,
up the hill,
Gallop'd the gallant three hundred,
the Heavy Brigade.

III.

Fell like a cannon-shot,
Burst like a thunder-bolt,
Crash'd like a hurricane,
Broke thro' the mass from below,
Drove thro' the midst of the foe,
Plunged up and down, to and fro,
Rode flashing blow upon blow,
Brave Inniskillens and Greys
Whirling their sabres in circles of
light!
And some of us, all in amaze,
Who were held for a while from the
fight,
And were only standing at gaze,
When the dark-muffled Russian crowd
Folded its wings from the left and the
right,

And roll'd them around like a cloud —
 O mad for the charge and the battle
 were we,
 When our own good redcoats sank
 from sight,
 Like drops of blood in a dark-gray
 sea,
 And we turn'd to each other, mutter-
 ing, all dismay'd,
 Lost are the gallant three hundred, the
 Heavy Brigade!

IV.

But they rode like Victors and Lords
 Thro' the forest of lances and swords
 In the heart of the Russian hordes;
 They rode, or they stood at bay —
 Struck with the sword-hand and slew,
 Down with the bridle-hand drew
 The foe from the saddle and threw
 Underfoot there in the fray —
 Ranged like a storm or stood like a
 rock
 In the wave of a stormy day;
 Till suddenly shock upon shock
 Stagger'd the mass from without,
 For our men gallopt up with a cheer
 and a shout,
 And the Russian surged, and waver'd,
 and reel'd
 Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out
 of the field,
 Over the brow and away.

V.

Glory to each and to all, and the
 charge that they made!
 Glory to all the three hundred, the
 Heavy Brigade!

TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE
 MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH
 CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

I.

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest
 Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
 Ilion falling, Rome arising,
 wars, and filial faith and Dido's
 pyre;

II.

Landscape-lover, lord of language
 more than he that sang the Works
 and Days,
 All the chosen coin of fancy
 flashing out from many a golden
 phrase;

III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
 tilth and vineyard, hive and horse
 and herd;
 All the charm of all the Muses
 often flowering in a lonely word;

IV.

Poet of the happy Tityrus
 piping underneath his beechen
 bowers;
 Poet of the poet-satyr
 whom the laughing shepherd
 bound with flowers;

V.

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
 in the blissful years again to be,
 Summers of the snakeless meadow,
 unlaborious earth and oarless
 sea;

VI.

Thou that seest Universal
 Nature moved by Universal
 Mind;
 Thou majestic in thy sadness
 at the doubtful doom of human
 kind;

VII.

Light among the vanish'd ages;
 star that gildest yet this phantom
 shore;
 Golden branch amid the shadows,
 kings and realms that pass to rise
 no more;

VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
 fallen every purple Cæsar's
 dome —
 Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
 sound for ever of Imperial
 Rome —

IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,
 and the Rome of freemen holds
 her place,
 I, from out the Northern Island
 sunder'd once from all the human
 race,

X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,
 I that loved thee since my day
 began,
 Wieler of the stateliest measure
 ever moulded by the lips of man.

DESPAIR: A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.

[A man and his wife having lost faith in a God, and hope of a life to come, and being utterly miserable in this, resolve to end themselves by drowning. The woman is drowned, but the man is rescued by a minister of the sect he had abandoned.]

Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel there looking over the sand?
Follow'd us too that night, and dogg'd us, and drew me to land?

What did I feel that night? You are curious. How should I tell?
Does it matter so much what I felt? You rescued me — yet — was it well
That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd, between me and the deep and my doom
Three days since, three more dark days of the Godless gloom
Of a life without sun, without health, without hope, without any delight
In anything here upon earth? but ah God, that night, that night
When the rolling eyes of the light-house there on the fatal neck
Of land running out into rock — they had saved many hundreds from wreck —
Glared on our way toward death, I remember I thought as we past
Does it matter how many they saved? we are all of us wreck'd at last —
“Do you fear,” and there came thro' the roar of the breaker a whisper, a breath
“Fear? am I not with you? I am frightened at life not death.”

And the suns of the limitless Universe sparkled and shone in the sky,
Flashing with fires as of God, but we knew that their light was a lie —
Bright as with deathless hope — but, however they sparkled and shone,
The dark little worlds running round them were worlds of woe like our own —
No soul in the heaven above, no soul on the earth below,
A fiery scroll written over with lamentation and woe.

See, we were nursed in the dark night-fold of your fatalist creed,
And we turn'd to the growing dawn, we had hoped for a dawn indeed,
When the light of a Sun that was coming would scatter the ghosts of the Past,
And the cramping creeds that had madden'd the peoples would vanish at last,
And we broke away from the Christ, our human brother and friend,
For He spoke, or it seem'd that He spoke, of a Hell without help, without end.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but the promise had faded away;
We had past from a cheerless night to the glare of a drearier day;
He is only a cloud and a smoke who was once a pillar of fire,
The guess of a worm in the dust and the shadow of its desire —
Of a worm as it writhes in a world of the weak trodden down by the strong,
Of a dying worm in a world, all massacre, murder, and wrong.

O we poor orphans of nothing — alone on that lonely shore —
Born of the brainless Nature who knew not that which she bore!
Trusting no longer that earthly flower would be heavenly fruit —
Come from the brute, poor souls — no souls — and to die with the brute —

Nay, but I am not claiming your pity: I know you of old —
Small pity for those that have ranged from the narrow warmth of your fold,
Where you bawl'd the dark side of your faith and a God of eternal rage,
Till you flung us back on ourselves, and the human heart, and the Age.

But pity — the Pagan held it a vice — was in her and in me,
Helpless, taking the place of the pitying God that should be!
Pity for all that aches in the grasp of an idiot power,
And pity for our own selves on an earth that bore not a flower;
Pity for all that suffers on land or in air or the deep,
And pity for our own selves till we long'd for eternal sleep.

“Lightly step over the sands! the waters — you hear them call!
Life with its anguish, and horrors, and errors — away with it all!”
And she laid her hand in my own — she was always loyal and sweet —
Till the points of the foam in the dusk came playing about our feet.
There was a strong sea-current would sweep us out to the main.
“Ah God” tho' I felt as I spoke I was taking the name in vain —

"Ah God" and we turn'd to each other, we kiss'd, we embraced, she and I,
 Knowing the Love we were used to believe everlasting would die:
 We had read their know-nothing books and we lean'd to the darker side —
 Ah God, should we find Him, perhaps, perhaps, if we died, if we died?
 We never had found Him on earth — this earth is a fatherless Hell —
 "Dear Love, for ever and ever, for ever and ever farewell!"
 Never a cry so desolate, not since the world began;
 Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the coming of man.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and you saved me, a valueless life.
 Not a grain of gratitude mine! You have parted the man from the wife.
 I am left alone on the land, she is all alone in the sea,
 If a curse meant ought, I would curse you for not having let me be.

Visions of youth — for my brain was drunk with the water, it seems;
 I had past into perfect-quiet at length out of pleasant dreams,
 And the transient trouble of drowning — what was it when match'd with the
 pains
 Of the hellish heat of a wretched life rushing back thro' the veins?

Why should I live? one son had forged on his father and fled,
 And if I believed in a God, I would thank him, the other is dead,
 And there was a baby-girl, that had never look'd on the light:
 Happiest she of us all, for she past from the night to the night.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-born, her glory, her boast,
 Struck hard at the tender heart of the mother, and broke it almost;
 Tho', name and fame dying out for ever in endless time,
 Does it matter so much whether crown'd for a virtue, or hang'd for a crime?

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood there, naked, amazed
 In a world of arrogant opulence, fear'd myself turning crazed,
 And I would not be mock'd in a madhouse! and she, the delicate wife,
 With a grief that could only be cured, if cured, by the surgeon's knife, —

Why should we bear with an hour of torture, a moment of pain,
 If every man die for ever, if all his griefs are in vain,
 And the homeless planet at length will be wheel'd thro' the silence of space,
 Motherless evermore of an ever-vanishing race,
 When the worm shall have writhed its last, and its last brother-worm will have
 fled
 From the dead fossil skull that is left in the rocks of an earth is dead?

Have I crazed myself over their horrible infidel writings? O yes,
 For these are the new dark ages, you see, of the popular press,
 When the bat comes out of his cave, and the owls are whooping at noon,
 And Doubt is the lord of this dunghill and crows to the sun and the moon,
 Till the Sun and the Moon of our science are both of them turn'd into blood,
 And Hope will have broken her heart, running after a shadow of good;
 For their knowing and know-nothing books are scattered from hand to hand —
 We have knelt in your know-all chapel too looking over the sand.

What! I should call on that Infinite Love that has served us so well?
 Infinite wickedness rather that made everlasting Hell,
 Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us, and does what he will with his own;
 Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us groan!

Hell? if the souls of men were immortal, as men have been told,
 The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and the miser would yearn for his gold,
 And so there were Hell for ever! but were there a God as you say,
 His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly vanish'd away.

Ah yet — I have had some glimmer, at times, in my gloomiest woe,
 Of a God behind all — after all — the great God for aught that I know;
 But the God of Love and of Hell together — they cannot be thought;
 If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him and bring him to nought!

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it mine? for why would you save
 A madman to vex you with wretched words, who is best in his grave?
 Blasphemy! ay, why not, being damn'd beyond hope of grace?
 O would I were yonder with her, and away from your faith and your face!
 Blasphemy! true! I have scared you pale with my scandalous talk,
 But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that you walk.

Hence! she is gone! can I stay? can I breathe divorced from the Past?
 You needs must have good lynx-eyes if I do not escape you at last.
 Our orthodox coroner doubtless will find it a felo-de-se,
 And the stake and the cross-road, fool, if you will, does it matter to me?

MIDNIGHT, JUNE 30, 1879.

I.

MIDNIGHT — in no midsummer tune
 The breakers lash the shores:
 The cuckoo of a joyless June
 Is calling out-of-doors:

And thou hast vanish'd from thine
 own
 To that which looks like rest,
 True brother, only to be known
 By those who love thee best.

II.

Midnight — and joyless June gone by,
 And from the deluged park
 The cuckoo of a worse July
 Is calling thro' the dark:

But thou art silent under-ground,
 And o'er thee streams the rain,
 True poet, surely to be found
 When Truth is found again.

III.

And, now to these unsummer'd skies
 The summer bird is still,
 Far off a phantom cuckoo cries
 From out a phantom hill;

And thro' this midnight breaks the
 sun
 Of sixty years away,
 The light of days when life begun,
 The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with
 thee,
 And all my hopes were thine —
 As all thou wert was one with me,
 May all thou art be mine!

EARLY SPRING.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
 Makes all things new,
 And domes the red-plough'd hills
 With loving blue;
 The blackbirds have their wills,
 The throistles too.

Opens a door in Heaven;
 From skies of glass
 A Jacob's-ladder falls
 On greening grass,
 And o'er the mountain-walls
 Young angels pass.

Before them fleets the shower,
 And burst the buds,
 And shine the level lands,
 And flash the floods;
 The stars are from their hands
 Flung thro' the woods;

The woods by living airs
 How freshly fann'd,
 Light airs from where the deep,
 All down the sand,
 Is breathing in his sleep,
 Heard by the land!

O follow, leaping blood,
 The season's lure!
 O heart, look down and up,
 Serene, secure,
 Warm as the crocus-cup,
 Like snowdrops, pure!

Past, future, glimpse and fade
 Thro' some slight spell,
 Some gleam from yonder vale,
 Some far blue fell,
 And sympathies, how frail,
 In sound and smell.

Till, at thy chuckled note,
 Thou twinkling bird,
 The fairy fancies range,
 And, lightly stir'd,
 Ring little bells of change
 From word to word.

For now the Heavenly Power
 Makes all things new,
 And thaws the cold, and fills
 The flower with dew;
 The blackbirds have their wills,
 The poets too.

"FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE."

Row us out from Desenzano, to your
Sirmione row!
So they row'd, and there we landed —
"O venusta Sirmio!"
There to me thro' all the groves of
olive in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where
the purple flowers grow,
Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the
Poet's hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen-
hundred years ago,
"Frater Ave atque Vale" — as we
wander'd to and fro
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the
Garda-lake below
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-
silvery Sirmio!

FREEDOM.

O Thou so fair in Summers gone,
While yet thy fresh and virgin soul
Inform'd the column'd Parthenon,
The glittering Capitol;

So fair in southern sunshine bathed,
But scarce of such majestic mien
As here with forehead vapor-swathed
In meadows ever green;

For thou — when Athens reign'd and
Rome,
Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with
pain

To mark in many a freeman's home
The slave, the scourge, the chain;

O follower of the Vision, still
In motion to the distant gleam,
Howe'er blind force and brainless will
May jar thy golden dream,

Who, like great Nature, wouldst not
mar
By changes all too fierce and fast
This order of our Human Star,
This heritage of the past;

O scorner of the party cry
That wanders from the public good,
Thou — when the nations rear on high
Their idol smear'd with blood,

And when they roll their idol down —
Of saner Worship sanely proud;
Thou loather of the lawless crown
As of the lawless crowd;

How long thine ever-growing mind
Hath still'd the blast and strewn the
wave,
Though some of late would raise a
wind

To sing thee to thy grave,

Men loud against all forms of
power —
Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous
tongues,
Expecting all things in an hour —
Brass mouths and iron lungs!

POEMS, BY TWO BROTHERS.¹

[ALFRED AND CHARLES TENNYSON.]

"Hæc nos novimus esse nihil." — MARTIAL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poems were written from the ages of fifteen to eighteen, not conjointly, but individually; which may account for their difference of style and matter. To light upon any novel combination of images, or to open any vein of sparkling thought untouched before, were no easy task; indeed, the remark itself is as old as the truth is clear; and, no doubt, if submitted to the microscopic eye of periodical criticism, a long list of inaccuracies and imitations would result from the investigation. But so it is: we have passed the Rubicon, and we leave the rest to fate; though its edict may create a fruitless regret that we ever emerged from "the shade," and courted notoriety.

March, 1827.

'Tis sweet to lead from stage to stage,
Like infancy to a maturer age,
The fleeting thoughts that crowd
 quick Fancy's view,
And the coy image into form to woo;
Till all its charms to life and shape
 awake,
Wrought to the finest polish they can
 take:
Now out of sight the crafty Proteus
 steals,
The mind's quick emissaries at his
 heels,
Its nature now a partial light reveals.
Each moment's labor, easier than
 before,
Embodies the illusive image more;
Brings it more closely underneath the
 eye,
And lends it form and palpability.
What late in shadowy vision fled
 by,
Receives at each essay a deepening
 dye;
Till diction gives us, modell'd into
 song,
The fairy phantoms of the motley
 throng;
Detaining and elucidating well
Her airy embryos with binding spell;
For when the mind reflects its image
 true —
Sees its own aim — expression must
 ensue;
If all but language is supplied be-
 fore,

She quickly follows, and the task is
 o'er.
Thus when the hand of pyrotechnic
 skill
Has stored the spokes of the fantastic
 wheel,
Apply the flame — it spreads as its
 design'd,
And glides and lightens o'er the track
 defined;
Unerring on its faithful pathway burns,
Searches each nook, and tracks its
 thousand turns;
The well-fill'd tubes in flexile flame
 arrays,
And fires each winding of the preg-
 nant maze;
Feeding on prompt materials, spurns
 delay,
Till o'er the whole the lambent glories
 play.
I know no joy so well deserves the
 name,
None that more justly may that title
 claim,
Than that of which the poet is pos-
 sess'd
When warm imagination fires his
 breast,
And countless images like claimants
 throng,
Prompting the ardent ecstasy of song.
He walks his study in a dreaming
 mood,
Like Pythia's priestess panting with
 the god;

¹ London: Printed for W. Simpkin, and R. Marshall, Stationers-hall Court; and J. and J. Jackson, Louth. MDCCCXXVII.

His varying brow, betraying what he
feels,
The labor of his plastic mind reveals :
Now roughly furrow'd into anxious
storms,
If with much toil his lab'ring lines he
forms ;
Now brightening into triumph as, the
skein
Unravelling, he cons them o'er again,
As each correction of his favorite piece
Confers more smoothness, elegance,
or ease.

Such are the sweets of song — and in
this age,

Perchance too many in its lists en-
gage ;
And they who now would fain awake
the lyre,
May swell this supernumerary choir :
But ye, who deign to read, forget t'
apply
The searching microscope of scrutiny :
Few from too near inspection fail to
lose,
Distance on all a mellowing haze
bestows ;
And who is not indebted to that aid
Which throws his failures into wel-
come shade ?

POEMS.

STANZAS.

Yon star of eve, so soft and clear,
Beams mildly from the realms of
rest ;
And, sure, some deathless angel there
Lives in its light supremely blest :
Yet if it be a spirit's shrine,
I think, my love, it must be thine.

Oh ! if in happier worlds than this
The just rejoice — to thee is giv'n
To taste the calm, undying bliss
Eternally in that blue heav'n,
Whither thine earnest soul would flow,
While yet it linger'd here below.
If Beauty, Wit, and Virtue find
In heav'n a more exalted throne,
To thee such glory is assign'd,
And thou art matchless and alone :
Who lived on earth so pure — may
grace
In heav'n the brightest seraph's place.

For tho' on earth thy beauty's bloom
Blush'd in its spring, and faded then,
And, mourning o'er thine early tomb,
I weep thee still, but weep in vain ;
Bright was the transitory gleam
That cheer'd thy life's short wav'ring
dream.

Each youthful rival may confess
Thy look, thy smile, beyond com-
pare,
Nor ask the palm of loveliness,
When thou wert more than doubly
fair :
Yet ev'n the magic of that form
Drew from thy mind its loveliest
charm.

Be thou as the immortal are,
Who dwell beneath their God's own
wing ;

A spirit of light, a living star,
A holy and a searchless thing :
But oh ! forget not those who mourn,
Because thou canst no more return.

“IN EARLY YOUTH I LOST MY
SIRE.”

“Hinc mihi prima mali labes.” — VIRGIL.

In early youth I lost my sire,
That fost'ring guide, which all require,
But chief in youth, when passion
glows,
And, if uncheck'd, to frenzy grows,
The fountain of a thousand woes.
To flowers it is an hurtful thing
To lose the sunshine in the spring ;
Without the sun they cannot bloom,
And seldom to perfection come.
E'en so my soul, that might have
borne
The fruits of virtue, left forlorn,
By every blast of vice was torn.
Why lowers my brow, dost thou en-
quire ?
Why burns mine eye with feverish
fire ?
With hatred now, and now with ire ?
In early youth I lost my sire.

From this I date whatever vice
Has numb'd my feelings into ice ;
From this — the frown upon my brow ;
From this — the pangs that rack me
now.

My wealth, I can with safety say,
Ne'er bought me one unruffled day,
But only wore my life away.
The pruning-knife ne'er lopp'd a
bough ;
My passions spread, and strengthen'd
too.

The chief of these was vast ambition,
 That long'd with eagle-wing to soar;
 Nor ever soften'd in contrition,
 Tho' that wild wing were drench'd
 in gore.
 And other passions play'd their part
 On stage most fit—a youthful heart;
 Till far beyond all hope I fell,
 A play-thing for the fiends of hell—
 A vessel, tost upon a deep
 Whose stormy waves would never
 sleep.
 Alas! when virtue once has flown,
 We need not ask why peace is gone:
 If she at times a moment play'd
 With bright beam on my mind's dark
 shade,
 I knew the rainbow soon would fade!
 Why thus it is, dost thou enquire?
 Why bleeds my breast with tortures
 dire?
 Loathes the rank earth, yet soars not
 higher?
In early youth I lost my sire.

MEMORY.

"The memory is perpetually looking back when we have nothing present to entertain us: it is like those repositories in animals that are filled with stores of food on which they may ruminate when their present pasture fails."—ADDISON.

MEMORY! dear enchanter!
 Why bring back to view
 Dreams of youth, which banter
 All that e'er was true?

Why present before me
 Thoughts of years gone by,
 Which, like shadows o'er me,
 Dim in distance fly?

Days of youth, now shaded
 By twilight of long years,
 Flowers of youth, now faded
 Though bathed in sorrow's tears:

Thoughts of youth, which waken
 Mournful feelings now,
 Fruits which time hath shaken
 From off their parent bough:

Memory! why, oh why,
 This fond heart consuming,
 Show me years gone by,
 When those hopes were blooming?

Hopes which now are parted,
 Hopes which then I prized,
 Which this world, cold-hearted,
 Ne'er has realized?

I knew not then its strife,
 I knew not then its rancor;

In every rose of life,
 Alas! there lurks a canker.

Round every palm-tree, springing
 With bright fruit in the waste,
 A mournful asp is clinging,
 Which sours it to our taste.

O'er every fountain, pouring
 Its waters thro' the wild,
 Which man imbibes, adoring,
 And deems it undefiled,

The poison-shrubs are dropping
 Their dark dews day by day;
 And Care is hourly lopping,
 Our greenest boughs away!

Ah! these are thoughts that grieve
 me
 Then, when others rest.
 Memory! why deceive me
 By thy visions blest?

Why lift the veil, dividing
 The brilliant courts of spring—
 Where gilded shapes are gliding
 In fairy coloring—

From age's frosty mansion,
 So cheerless and so chill?
 Why bid the bleak expansion
 Of past life meet us still?

Where's now that peace of mind
 O'er youth's pure bosom stealing,
 So sweet and so refined,
 So exquisite a feeling?

Where's now the heart exulting
 In pleasure's buoyant sense,
 And gaiety, resulting
 From conscious innocence?

All, all have past and fled,
 And left me lorn and lonely;
 All those dear hopes are dead,
 Remembrance wakes them only!

I stand like some lone tower
 Of former days remaining,
 Within whose place of power
 The midnight owl is plaining;—

Like oak-tree old and gray,
 Whose trunk with age is failing,
 Thro' whose dark boughs for aye
 The winter winds are wailing.

Thus, Memory, thus thy light
 O'er this worn soul is gleaming,
 Like some far fire at night
 Along the dun deep streaming.

"YES — THERE BE SOME GAY
SOULS WHO NEVER
WEEP."

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducuntium ortus ex animo."
— GRAY'S *Poemata*.

YES — there be some gay souls who
never weep,
And some who, weeping, hate the
tear they shed;
But sure in them the heart's fine feel-
ings sleep,
And all its loveliest attributes are
dead.

For oh! to feel it swelling to the eye,
When melancholy thoughts have
sent it there,
Is something so akin to ecstasy,
So true a balm to misery and care,

That those are cold, I ween, who can-
not feel
The soft, the sweet, the exquisite
control,
Which tears, as down the moisten'd
cheek they steal,
Hold o'er the yielding empire of the
soul.

They soothe, they ease, and they re-
fine the breast,
And blunt the agonizing stings of
grief,
And lend the tortured mind a healing
rest,
A welcome opiate, and a kind relief.

Then, if the pow'r of woe thou wouldst
disarm,
The tear thy burning wounds will
gently close;
The rage of grief will sink into a
calm,
And her wild frenzy find the wish'd
repose.

"HAVE YE NOT SEEN THE
BUOYANT ORB?"

"A bubble . . .
That in the act of seizing shrinks to
naught."

— CLARE.

HAVE ye not seen the buoyant orb,
which oft
The tube and childhood's playful
breath produce?
Fair, but impalpable — it mounts
aloft,
While o'er its surface rove the rest-
less hues;

And sun-born tints their gliding
bloom diffuse:

But 'twill not brook the touch —
the vision bright,
Dissolved with instantaneous burst,
we lose;
Breaks the thin globe with its array
of light
And shrinks at once to naught, at
contact e'er so slight.

So the gay hopes we chase with ardent
zeal —

Which view'd at distance to our
gaze appear
Sweetly embodied, tangible, and
real —

Elude our grasp, and melt away to
air:

The test of touch too delicate to bear,
In unsubstantial loveliness thy glow
Before our wistful eyes, too passing
fair

For earth to realize or man to
know,
Whose life is but a scene of fallacy
and woe.

THE EXILE'S HARP.

I WILL hang thee, my harp, by the
side of the fountain,
On the whispering branch of the
lone-waving willow:

Above thee shall rush the hoarse gale
of the mountain,

Below thee shall tumble the dark
breaking billow.

The winds shall blow by thee, aban-
don'd, forsaken,

The wild gales alone shall arouse
thy sad strain;

For where is the heart or the hand to
awaken

The sounds of thy soul-soothing
sweetness again?

Oh! harp of my fathers!

Thy chords shall decay,

One by one with the strings

Shall thy notes fade away;

Till the fiercest of tempests

Around thee may yell,

And not waken one sound

Of thy desolate shell!

Yet, oh! yet, ere I go, will I fling a
wreath round thee,

With the richest of flowers in the
green valley springing;

Those that see shall remember the
hand that hath crown'd thee,

When, wither'd and dead, to thee
still they are clinging.

There! now I have wreathed thee —
the roses are twining

Thy chords with their bright blossoms glowing and red :
 Though the lapse of one day see their freshness declining,
 Yet bloom for one day when thy minstrel has fled !
 Oh ! harp of my fathers !
 No more in the hall,
 The souls of the chieftains
 Thy strains shall enthral :
 One sweep will I give thee,
 And wake thy bold swell ;
 Then, thou friend of my bosom,
 Forever farewell !

"WHY SHOULD WE WEEP FOR THOSE WHO DIE ?"

"Quamobrem, si dolorum finem mor affert, si securioris et melioris initium viæ : si futura mala avertit — cur eam tantopere accusare, ex qua potius consolationem et lætitiâ haurire fas esset ?" — CICERO.

WHY should we weep for those who die ?

They fall — their dust returns to dust ;
 Their souls shall live eternally
 Within the mansions of the just.

They die to live — they sink to rise,
 They leave this wretched mortal shore ;
 But brighter suns and bluer skies
 Shall smile on them forevermore.

Why should we sorrow for the dead ?
 Our life on earth is but a span ;
 They tread the path that all must tread,
 They die the common death of man.

The noblest songster of the gale
 Must cease, when Winter's frowns appear ;
 The reddest rose is wan and pale,
 When Autumn tints the changing year.

The fairest flower on earth must fade,
 The brightest hopes on earth must die :

Why should we mourn that man was made
 To droop on earth, but dwell on high ?

The soul, th' eternal soul, must reign
 In worlds devoid of pain and strife ;
 Then why should mortal man complain
 Of death, which leads to happier life ?

"RELIGION ! THO' WE SEEM TO SPURN."

"Sublatam ex oculis quærimus." — HORACE.

RELIGION ! tho' we seem to spurn
 Thy hallow'd joys, their loss we mourn,

With many a secret tear ;
 Tho' we have long dissolved the tie,
 The hour we broke it claims a sigh,
 And Virtue still is dear.

Our hearts forget not she was fair,
 And her pure feelings, ling'ring there,
 Half win us back from ill ;
 And — tho' so long to Vice resign'd
 'Twould seem we've left her far behind —
 Pursue and haunt us still.

Thus light's all-penetrating glow
 Attends us to the deeps below,
 With wav'ring, rosy gleam :
 To the bold inmates of the bell
 Faint rays of distant sunlight¹ steal,
 And thro' the waters beam.

By the rude blasts of passion tost,
 We sigh for bliss we ne'er had lost,
 Had Conscience been our guide ;
 She burns a lamp we need not trim,
 Whose steady flame is never dim,
 But throws its lustre wide.

REMORSE.

"... Sudant tacita præcordia culpa."
 — JUVENAL.

Oh ! 'tis a fearful thing to glance
 Back on the gloom of misspent years :
 What shadowy forms of guilt advance,
 And fill me with a thousand fears !
 The vices of my life arise,
 Portray'd in shapes, alas ! too true ;
 And not one beam of hope breaks through,

To cheer my old and aching eyes,
 T' illumine my night of wretchedness
 My age of anguish and distress.
 If I am damn'd, why find I not
 Some comfort in this earthly spot ?
 But no ! this world and that to come
 Are both to me one scene of gloom !
 Lest ought of solace I should see,
 Or lose the thoughts of what I do,
 Remorse, with soul-felt agony,
 Holds up the mirror to my view.
 And I was cursed from my birth,
 A reptile made to creep on earth,
 An hopeless outcast, born to die
 A living death eternally !

¹A vermeil color plays on the hands and faces of those who descend in this machine.

With too much conscience to have
rest,

Too little to be ever blest,
To yon vast world of endless woe,
Unlighted by the cheerful day,
My soul shall wing her weary way;
To those dread depths where aye
the same

Throughout the waste of darkness,
glow

The glimmerings of the boundless
flame.

And yet I cannot here below
Take my full cup of guilt, as some,
And laugh away my doom to come.
I would I'd been all-heartless! then
I might have sinn'd like other men;
But all this side the grave is fear,
A wilderness so dank and drear,
That never wholesome plant would
spring;

And all behind — I dare not think!
I would not risk th' imagining —

From the full view my spirits
shrink;

And starting backwards, yet I cling
To life, whose every hour to me
Hath been increase of misery.

But yet I cling to it, for well
I know the pangs that rack me
now

Are trifles, to the endless hell
That waits me, when my burning
brow

And my wrung eyes shall hope in
vain

For one small drop to cool the pain,
The fury of that madd'ning flame
That then shall scorch my writhing
frame!

Fiends! who have goaded me to ill!
Distracting fiends, who goad me still!
If e'er I work'd a sinful deed,

Ye know how bitter was the
draught;

Ye know my inmost soul would bleed,
And ye have look'd at me and
laugh'd

Triumphing that I could not free
My spirit from your slavery!
Yet is there that in me which says,
Should these old feet their course
retread

From out the portal of my days,
That I should lead the life I've led:
My agony, my torturing shame,
My guilt, my errors all the same!
O God! that thou wouldst grant that
ne'er

My soul its clay-cold bed forsake,
That I might sleep, and never wake
Unto the thrill of conscious fear;

For when the trumpet's piercing cry
Shall burst upon my slum'ring ear,
And countless seraphs throng the
sky,

How shall I cast my shroud away,
And come into the blaze of day?
How shall I brook to hear each crime,
Here veil'd by secrecy and time,
Read out from thine eternal book?

How shall I stand before thy throne,
While earth shall like a furnace
burn?

How shall I bear the with'ring look
Of men and angels, who will turn
Their dreadful gaze on me alone?

“ON GOLDEN EVENINGS, WHEN THE SUN.”

“The bliss to meet,
And the pain to part!” — MOORE.

On golden evenings, when the sun
In splendor sinks to rest,
How we regret, when they are gone,
Those glories of the west,
That o'er the crimson-mantled sky
Threw their broad flush of deepest
dye!

But when the wheeling orb again
Breaks gorgeous on the view,
And tints the earth and fires the main
With rich and ruddy hue,
We soon forget the eve of sorrow,
For joy at that more brilliant morrow.

E'en so when much-loved friends
depart,
Their farewell rends the swelling
heart;
But when those friends again we see,
We glow with soul-felt ecstasy,
That far exceeds the tearful feeling
That o'er our bosoms then was steal-
ing.

The rapture of that joyous day
Bids former sorrows fade away;
And Memory dwells no more on sad-
ness
When breaks that sudden morn of
gladness!

THE DELL OF E—.

“Tantum ævi longinqua valet mutare vetus-
tas!” — VIRGIL.

THERE was a long, low, rushy dell,
emboss'd

With knolls of grass and clumps of
copsewood green;

Midway a wandering burn the valley
cross'd,

And streak'd with silvery line the
woodland scene;

High hills on either side to heaven
upsprung,

Y-clad with groves of undulating
 pine,
 Upon whose heads the hoary vapors
 hung,
 And far — far off the heights were
 seen to shine
 In clear relief against the sapphire
 sky,
 And many a blue stream wander'd
 thro' the shade
 Of those dark groves that clomb the
 mountains high,
 And glistening 'neath each lone
 entangled glade,
 At length with brawling accent loudly
 fell
 Within the limpid brook that wound
 along the dell.
 How pleasant was the ever-varying
 light
 Beneath that emerald coverture of
 boughs!
 How often, at th' approach of dewy
 night,
 Have those tall pine-trees heard the
 lover's vows!
 How many a name was carved upon
 the trunk
 Of each old hollow willow-tree, that
 stoop'd
 To lave its branches in the brook,
 and drunk
 Its freshening dew! How many a
 cypress droop'd
 From those fair banks, where bloom'd
 the earliest flowers,
 Which the young year from her
 abounding horn
 Scatters profuse within her secret
 bowers!
 What rapturous gales from that wild
 dell were borne!
 And, floating on the rich spring
 breezes, flung
 Their incense o'er that wave on whose
 bright banks they sprung!
 Long years had past, and there again
 I came,
 But man's rude hand had sorely
 scathed the dell;
 And though the cloud-capt mountains,
 still the same,
 Uprear'd each heaven-invading pin-
 nacle;
 Yet were the charms of that lone
 valley fled,
 And the gray winding of the stream
 was gone;
 The brook once murmuring o'er its
 pebbly bed,
 Now deeply — straightly — noise-
 lessly went on.
 Slow turn'd the sluggish wheel beneath
 its force,
 Where clattering mills disturb'd
 the solitude:

Where was the prattling of its former
 course?
 Its shelving, sedgy sides y-crown'd
 with wood?
 The willow trunks were fell'd, the
 names erased
 From one broad shatter'd pine which
 still its station graded.

Remnant of all its brethren, there it
 stood,
 Braving the storms that swept the
 cliffs above,
 Where once, throughout th' impene-
 trable wood,
 Were heard the plainings of the pen-
 sive dove.
 But man had bid th' eternal forests bow
 That bloom'd upon the earth-im-
 bedded base
 Of the strong mountain, and per-
 chance they now
 Upon the billows were the dwelling-
 place
 Of their destroyers, and bore terror
 round
 The trembling earth:—ah! love-
 lier had they still
 Whisper'd unto the breezes with low
 sound,
 And greenly flourish'd on their
 native hill,
 And flinging their proud arms in state
 on high,
 Spread out beneath the sun their
 glorious canopy!

MY BROTHER.

"Meorum prime sodalium." — HORACE.

With falt'ring step I came to see,
 In Death's unheeding apathy,
 That friend so dear in life to me,
 My brother!

'Mid flowers of loveliest scent and hue
 That strew'd thy form, 'twas sad to
 view
 Thy lifeless face peep wanly through,
 My brother!

Why did they (there they did not
 feel!)
 With studious care all else conceal,
 But thy cold face alone reveal,
 My brother!

They might have known, what used
 to glow
 With smiles, and oft dispell'd my woe,
 Would chill me most, when faded so,
 My brother!

The tolling of thy funeral bell,
The nine low notes that spoke thy
knell,
I know not how I bore so well,
My brother!

But oh! the chill, dank mould that
slid,
Dull-sounding, on thy coffin-lid,
That drew more tears than all beside,
My brother!

And then I hurried fast away;
How could I e'er have borne to stay
Where careless hand inhumed thy
clay, My brother!

ANTONY TO CLEOPATRA.

O CLEOPATRA! fare thee well,
We two can meet no more;
This breaking heart alone can tell
The love to thee I bore.
But wear not thou the conqueror's
chain
Upon thy race and thee;
And though we ne'er can meet again,
Yet still be true to me:
For I for thee have lost a throne,
To wear the crown of love alone.

Fair daughter of a regal line!
To thralldom bow not tame;
My every wish on earth was thine,
My every hope the same.
And I have moved within thy sphere,
And lived within thy light;
And oh! thou wert to me so dear,
I breathed but in thy sight!
A subject world I lost for thee,
For thou wert all my world to me!

Then when the shriekings of the dying
Were heard along the wave,
Soul of my soul! I saw thee flying;
I follow'd thee, to save.
The thunder of the brazen prows
O'er Actium's ocean rung;
Fame's garland faded from my brows,
Her wreath away I flung.
I sought, I saw, I heard but thee:
For what to love was victory?

Thine on the earth, and on the throne,
And in the grave, am I;
And, dying, still I am thine own,
Thy bleeding Antony.
How shall my spirit joy to hear
That thou art ever true!
Nay—weep not—dry that burning
tear,
That bathes thine eyes' dark hue.
Shades of my fathers! lo! I come;
I hear your voices from the tomb!

"I WANDER IN DARKNESS AND SORROW."

I WANDER in darkness and sorrow,
Unfriend'd, and cold, and alone,
As dismally gurgles beside me
The bleak river's desolate moan.
The rise of the volleying thunder
The mountain's lone echoes repeat:
The roar of the wind is around me,
The leaves of the year at my feet.

I wander in darkness and sorrow,
Uncheer'd by the moon's placid ray;
Not a friend that I lov'd but is dead,
Not a hope but has faded away!
Oh! when shall I rest in the tomb,
Wrapt about with the chill winding-
sheet?
For the roar of the wind is around me,
The leaves of the year at my feet.

I heed not the blasts that sweep o'er
me,
I blame not the tempests of night;
They are not the foes who have ban-
ish'd
The visions of youthful delight:
I hail the wild sound of their raving,
Their mercilese presence I greet;
Though the roar of the wind be around
me,
The leaves of the year at my feet.

In this waste of existence, for solace,
On whom shall my lone spirit call?
Shall I fly to the friends of my bosom?
My God! I have buried them all!
They are dead, they are gone, they
are cold,
My embraces no longer they meet;
Let the roar of the wind be around
me,
The leaves of the year at my feet!

Those eyes that glanced love unto
mine,
With motionless slumbers are prest;
Those hearts which once throbb'd but
for me,
Are chill as the earth where they
rest.
Then around on my wan wither'd form
Let the pitiless hurricanes beat;
Let the roar of the wind be around me,
The leaves of the year at my feet!

Like the voice of the owl in the hall,
Where the song and the banquet
have ceased,
Where the green leaves have mantled
the hearth
Whence arose the proud flame of
the feast;
So I cry to the storm, whose dark
wing

Scatters on me the wild-driving
sleet—
"Let the roar of the wind be around me,
The fall of the leaves at my feet!"

"TO ONE WHOSE HOPE RE-
POSED ON THEE."

"She's gone . . .
She's sunk, with her my joys entombing!"
— BYRON.

To one whose hope reposed on thee,
Whose very life was in thine own,
How deep a wound thy death must be,
And the wild thought that thou art
gone!

Oh! must the earth-born reptiles prey
Upon that cheek of late so bloom-
ing?
Alas! this heart must wear away
Long ere that cheek they've done
consuming!

For hire the sexton toll'd thy bell—
But why should he receive a meed
Who work'd at least no mortal's weal,
And made one lonely bosom bleed?

For hire with ready mould he stood—
But why should gain his care repay
Who told, as harshly as he could,
That all I loved was past away?

For, sure, it was too rude a blow
For Misery's ever-wakeful ear,
To cast the earth with sudden throw
Upon the grave of one so dear:

For aye these bitter tears must swell,
Tho' the sad scene is past and gone;
And still I hear the tolling bell,
For Memory makes each sense her
own.

But stay, my soul! thy plaint forbear,
And be thy murmur'ing song for-
given!
Tread but the path of Virtue here,
And thou shalt meet with her
in heaven!

THE OLD SWORD.

OLD Sword! tho' dim and rusted
Be now thy sheeny blade,
Thy glitt'ring edge encrusted
With cankers Time hath made;
Yet once around thee swell'd the
cry
Of triumph's fierce delight,
The shoutings of the victory,
The thunders of the fight!

Tho' age hath past upon thee
With still corroding breath,
Yet once stream'd redly on thee
The purpling tide of death:
What time amid the war of foes
The dastard's cheek grew pale,
As through the feudal field arose
The ringing of the mail.

Old Sword! what arm hath wielded
Thy richly gleaming brand,
Mid lordly forms who shielded
The maidens of their land?
And who hath clov'n his foes in
wrath
With thy puissant fire,
And scatter'd in his perilous path
The victims of his ire?

Old Sword! whose fingers clasp'd thee
Around thy carv'd hilt?
And with that hand which grasp'd
thee
What heroes' blood was spilt;
When fearlessly, with open hearts,
And lance to lance opposed,
Beneath the shade of barbed
darts
The dark-eyed warriors closed?

Old Sword! I would not burnish
Thy venerable rust,
Nor sweep away the tarnish
Of darkness and of dust!
Lie there, in slow and still decay,
Unfamed in olden rhyme,
The relic of a former day,
A wreck of ancient time!

THE GONDOLA.

"'Tis sweet to hear
At midnight, o'er the blue and moonlit deep,
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier."
— Don Juan.

O'er ocean's curling surges borne
along,
Arion sung—the dolphin caught
the strain,
As soft the mellow'd accents of his
tongue
Stole o'er the surface of the watery
plain.

And do those silver sounds, so deep,
so clear,
Possess less magic than Arion's lay?
Swell they less boldly on the ravish'd
ear,
Or with less cadence do they die
away?

Yon gondola, that skims the moon-
light sea,
Yields me those notes more wild
than Hourii's lyre,

That, as they rise, exalt to ecstasy,
And draw the tear as, length'ning,
they expire.

An arch of purest azure beams above,
A sea, as blue, as beauteous, spreads
below;

In this voluptuous clime of song and
love

What room for sorrow? who shall
cherish woe?

False thought! tho' pleasure wing the
careless hours,
Their stores tho' Cyprus and Arabia
send,

Tho' for the ear their fascinating power
Divine Timotheus and Cecilia
blend;—

All without Virtue's relish fail to
please,

Venetian charms the cares of Vice
alloy,

Joy's swiftest, brightest current they
can freeze,

And all the genuine sweets of life
destroy!

"WE MEET NO MORE."

We meet no more — the die is cast,
The chain is broke that tied us,
Our every hope on earth is past,
And there's no helm to guide us:
We meet no more — the roaring blast
And angry seas divide us!

And I stand on a distant shore,
The breakers round me swelling;
And lonely thoughts of days gone o'er
Have made this breast their dwelling:
We meet no more — We meet no more:
Farewell forever, Ellen!

WRITTEN

BY AN EXILE OF BASSORAH,
WHILE SAILING DOWN THE EU-
PHRATES.

Thou land of the lily! thy gay flowers
are blooming

In joy on thine hills, but they bloom
not for me;

For a dark gulf of woe, all my fond
hopes entombing,

Has roll'd it's black waves 'twixt
this lone heart and thee.

The far-distant hills, and the groves
of my childhood,

Now stream in the light of the sun's
setting ray;

And the tall-waving palms of my own
native wildwood

In the blue haze of distance are
melting away.

I see thee, Bassorah! in splendor re-
tiring,

Where thy waves and thy walls in
their majesty meet;

I see the bright glory thy pinnacles
firing,

And the broad vassal river that rolls
at thy feet.

I see thee but faintly — thy tall towers
are beaming

On the dusky horizon so far and so
blue;

And minaret and mosque in the dis-
tance are gleaming,

While the coast of the stranger ex-
pands on my view.

I see thee no more: for the deep
waves have parted

The land of my birth from her
desolate son;

And I am gone from thee, though
half broken-hearted,

To wander thro' climes where thy
name is unknown.

Farewell to my harp, which I hung in
my anguish

On the lonely palmetto that nods to
the gale;

For its sweet-breathing tones in for-
getfulness languish,

And around it the ivy shall weave a
green veil.

Farewell to the days which so smoothly
have glided

With the maiden whose look was like
Cama's young glance,

And the sheen of whose eyes was the
load-star which guided

My course on this earth thro' the
storms of mischance!

MARIA TO HER LUTE,

THE GIFT OF HER DYING LOVER.

"O laborum
Dulce lenimen!" — HORACE.

I LOVE thee, Lute! my soul is link'd
to thee

As by some tie — 'tis not a ground-
less love;

I cannot rouse thy plaintive melody,
And fail its magic influence to prove.

I think I found thee more than ever
dear

(If thought can work within this
fever'd brain)

Since Edward's lifeless form was
buried here,

And I deplored his hapless fate in
vain.

'Twas then to thee my strange affec-
tion grew,

For thou wert his — I've heard him
wake thy strain :
Oh! if in heaven each other we shall
view,
I'll bid him sweep thy mournful
chords again.

I would not change thee for the noblest
lyre
That ever lent its music to the
breeze :
How could Maria taste its note of fire ?
How wake a harmony that could
not please ?

Then, till mine eye shall glaze, and
cheek shall fade,
I'll keep thee, prize thee as my dear-
est friend ;
And oft I'll hasten to the green-wood
shade,
My hours in sweet, tho' fruitless
grief to spend.

For in the tear there is a nameless joy ;
The full warm gush relieves the
aching soul :
So still, to ease my hopeless agony,
My lute shall warble and my tears
shall roll.

THE VALE OF BONES.

"Albis informem — ossibus agrum."
— HORACE.

ALONG yon vapor-mantled sky
The dark-red moon is riding high ;
At times her beams in beauty break
Upon the broad and silv'ry lake ;
At times more bright they clearly fall
On some white castle's ruin'd wall ;
At times her partial splendor shines
Upon the grove of deep-black pines,
Through which the dreary night-breeze
moans,
Above this Vale of scatter'd bones.

The low, dull gale can scarcely stir
The branches of that black'ning fir,
Which betwixt me and heav'n flings
wide
Its shadowy boughs on either side,
And o'er yon granite rock uprears
Its giant form of many years.
And the shrill owl's desolate wail
Comes to mine ear along the gale,
As, list'ning to its lengthen'd tones,
I dimly pace the Vale of Bones.

Dark Valley! still the same art
thou,
Unchanged thy mountain's cloudy
brow ;
Still from yon cliffs, that part asunder,
Falls down the torrent's echoing
thunder ;

Still from this mound of reeds and
rushes
With bubbling sound the fountain
gushes ;
Thence, winding thro' the whisp'ring
ranks
Of sedges on the willowy banks,
Still brawling, chafes the rugged stones
That strew this dismal Vale of Bones.

Unchanged art thou! no storm hath
rent
Thy rude and rocky battlement ;
Thy rioting mountains sternly piled,
The screen of nature, wide and wild :
But who were they whose bones be-
strew
The heather, cold with midnight dew,
Upon whose slowly-rotting clay
The raven long hath ceased to prey,
But, mould'ring in the moonlight air,
Their wan, white skulls show bleak
and bare ?
And, aye, the dreary night-breeze
moans
Above them in this Vale of Bones!

I knew them all — a gallant band,
The glory of their native land,
And on each lordly brow elate
Sat valor and contempt of fate,
Fierceness of youth, and scorn of foe,
And pride to render blow for blow.
In the strong war's tumultuous crash
How darkly did their keen eyes flash !
How fearlessly each arm was raised !
How dazzlingly each broad-sword
blazed !
Though now the dreary night-breeze
moans
Above them in this Vale of Bones.

What lapse of time shall sweep
away
The memory of that gallant day,
When on to battle proudly going,
Your plumage to the wild winds blow-
ing,
Your tartans far behind ye flowing,
Your pennons raised, your clarions
sounding,
Fiercely your steeds beneath ye bound-
ing,
Ye mix'd the strife of warring foes
In fiery shock and deadly close ?
What stampings in the madd'ning
strife,
What thrusts, what stabs, with brand
and knife,
What desp'rate strokes for death or
life,
Were there! What cries, what thrill-
ing groans,
Re-echoed thro' the Vale of Bones!

Thou peaceful Vale, whose moun-
tains lonely

Sound to the torrent's chiding only,
Or wild goat's cry from rocky ledge,
Or bull-frog from the rustling sedge,
Or eagle from her airy cairn,
Or screaming of the startled hern —
How did thy million echoes waken
Amid thy caverns deeply shaken!
How with the red dew o'er thee rain'd
Thine emerald turf was darkly stain'd!
How did each innocent flower, that
sprung

Thy greenly-tangled glades among,
Blush with the big and purple drops
That dribbled from the leafy copse!
I paced the valley, when the yell
Of triumph's voice had ceased to swell;
When battle's brazen throat no more
Raised its annihilating roar.

There lay ye on each other piled,
Your brows with noble dust defiled;¹
There, by the loudly-gushing water,
Lay man and horse in mingled
slaughter.

Then wept I not, thrice gallant band;
For though no more each dauntless
hand

The thunder of the combat hurl'd,
Yet still with pride your lips were
curl'd;

And e'en in death's o'erwhelmingshade
Your fingers linger'd round the blade!
I deem'd, when gazing proudly there
Upon the fix'd and haughty air
That mark'd each warrior's bloodless
face,

Ye would not change the narrow space
Which each cold form of breathless
clay

Then cover'd, as on earth ye lay,
For realms, for sceptres, or for
thrones —

I dream'd not on this Vale of Bones!

But years have thrown their veil
between,
And alter'd is that lonely scene;
And dreadful emblems of thy might,
Stern dissolution! meet my sight:
The eyeless socket, dark and dull,
The hideous grinning of the skull,
Are sights which Memory disowns,
Thou melancholy Vale of Bones!

TO FANCY.

BRIGHT angel of heavenliest birth!
Who dwellest among us unseen,
O'er the gloomiest spot on the earth
There's a charm where thy footsteps
have been.

We feel thy soft sunshine in youth,
While our joys like young blossoms
are new;

¹ "Non indecoro pulvere sordidos."
— HORACE.

For oh! thou art sweeter than Truth,
And fairer and lovelier too!

The exile, who mourneth alone,
Is glad in the glow of thy smile,
Tho' far from the land of his own,
In the ocean's most desolate isle:
And the captive, who pines in his
chain,

Sees the banners of glory unroll'd,
As he dreams of his own native plain,
And the forms of the heroes of old.

In the earliest ray of the morn,
In the last rosy splendor of even,
We view thee — thy spirit is borne
On the murmuring zephyrs of
heaven:

Thou art in the sunbeam of noon,
Thou art in the azure of air,
If I pore on the sheen of the moon,
If I search the bright stars, thou
art there!

Thou art in the rapturous eye
Of the bard, when his visions rush
o'er him;
And like the fresh iris on high
Are the wonders that sparkle before
him.

Thou stirrest the thunders of song,
Those transports that brook not
control;
Thy voice is the charm of his tongue,
Thy magic the light of his soul!

Like the day-star that heralds the sun,
Thou seem'st, when our young hopes
are dawning;

But ah! when the day is begun,
Thou art gone like the star of the
morning!

Like a beam in the winter of years,
When the joys of existence are cold,
Thine image can dry up our tears,
And brighten the eyes of the old!

Tho' dreary and dark be the night
Of affliction that gathers around,
There is something of heaven in thy
light,

Glad spirit! where'er thou art found:
As calmly the sea-maid may lie

In her pearly pavilion at rest,
The heart-broken and friendless may
fly
To the shade of thy bower, and be
blest!

BOYHOOD.

"Ah, happy years! once more who would
not be a boy?" — *Child Harold*.

BOYHOOD's blest hours! when yet un-
fledged and callow,

We prove those joys we never can
retain,
In riper years with fond regret we
hallow,
Like some sweet scene we never see
again.

For youth — whate'er may be its petty
woes,
Its trivial sorrows — disappoint-
ments — fears,
As on in haste life's wintry current
flows —
Still claims, and still receives, its
debt of tears.

Yes! when, in grim alliance, grief and
time
Silver our heads and rob our hearts
of ease,
We gaze along the deeps of care and
crime
To the far, fading shore of youth
and peace;

Each object that we meet the more
endears
That rosy morn before a troubled
day;
That blooming dawn — that sunrise
of our years —
That sweet voluptuous vision past
away!

For by the welcome, tho' embittering
power
Of wakeful memory, we too well
behold
That lightsome — careless — unreturn-
ing hour,
Beyond the reach of wishes or of
gold.

And ye, whom blighted hopes or pas-
sion's heat
Have taught the pangs that care-
worn hearts endure,
Ye will not deem the vernal rose so
sweet!
Ye will not call the driven snow so
pure!

"DID NOT THY ROSEATE LIPS
OUTVIE."

"Ulla si iuris tibi pejerati
Pena, Barine, nocuisset unquam;
Denti si nigro fieres, vel uno
Turpior ungui
Crederem." — HORACE.

DID not thy roseate lips outvie
The gay anana's spicy bloom;¹

¹ Ulla says that the blossom of the West-
Indian anana is of so elegant a crimson as
even to dazzle the eye, and that the fragrancy
of the fruit discovers the plant, though con-
cealed from sight. — See ULLOA'S *Voyages*,
vol. i., p. 72.

Had not thy breath the luxury,
The richness of its deep perfume —

Were not the pearls it fans more clear
Than those which grace the valved
shell;
Thy foot more airy than the deer,
When startled from his lonely
dell —

Were not thy bosom's stainless white-
ness,
Where angel loves their vigils keep,
More heavenly than the dazzling
brightness
Of the cold crescent on the deep —

Were not thine eye a star might grace
Yon sapphire concave beaming
clear,
Or fill the vanish'd Pleiad's place,
And shine for aye as brightly there —

Had not thy locks the golden glow
That robes the gay and early east,
Thus falling in luxuriant flow
Around thy fair but faithless breast:

I might have deem'd that thou wert she
Of the Cumæan cave, who wrote
Each fate-involving mystery
Upon the feathery leaves that float,

Borne thro' the boundless waste of air,
Wherever chance might drive along.
But she was wrinkled — thou art fair:
And she was old — but thou art
young.

Her years were as the sands that strew
The fretted ocean-beach; but thou —
Triumphant in that eye of blue,
Beneath thy smoothly-marbled
brow;

Exulting in thy form thus moulded,
By nature's tenderest touch design'd;
Proud of the fetters thou hast folded
Around this fond deluded mind —

Deceivest still with practised look,
With fickle vow, and well-feign'd
sigh.
I tell thee, that I will not brook
Reiterated perjury!

Alas! I feel thy deep control,
E'en now when I would break thy
chain:
But while I seek to gain thy soul,
Ah! say — hast thou a soul to gain?

HUNTSMAN'S SONG.

"Who the melodies of morn can tell?"
— BEATTIE.

Oh! what is so sweet as a morning in
spring,
When the gale is all freshness, and
larks, on the wing,
In clear liquid carols their gratitude
sing?

I rove o'er the hill as it sparkles with
dew,
And the red flush of Phæbus with
ecstasy view,
As he breaks thro' the east o'er thy
crag, Benvenue!

And boldly I bound o'er the mountain-
ous scene,
Like the roe which I hunt thro' the
woodlands so green,
Or the torrent which leaps from the
height to the plain.

The life of the hunter is chainless and
gay,
As the wing of the falcon that wins
him his prey;
No song is so glad as his blithe rounde-
lay.

His eyes in soft arbors the Moslem
may close,
And Fayoum's rich odors may breathe
from the rose,
To scent his bright harem and lull his
repose:

Th' Italian may vaunt of his sweet
harmony,
And mingle soft sounds of voluptuous
glee;
But the lark's airy music is sweeter
to me.

Then happy the man who upsprings
with the morn,
But not from a couch of effeminate
lawn,
And slings o'er his shoulder his loud
bugle-horn!

PERSIA.

"The flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound."
— MILTON.

LAND of bright eye and lofty brow!
Whose every gale is balmy breath
Of incense from some sunny flower,
Which on tall hill or valley low,
In clustering maze or circling wreath,
Sheds perfume; or in blooming
bower

Of Schiraz or of Ispahan,
In bower untrod by foot of man,

Clasps round the green and fragrant
stem

Of lotos, fair and fresh and blue,
And crowns it with a diadem
Of blossoms, ever young and new;
Oh! lives there yet within thy soul
Aught of the fire of him who led
Thy troops, and bade thy thunder roll
O'er lone Assyria's crownless head?
I tell thee, had that conqueror red
From Thymbria's plain beheld
thy fall,

When stormy Macedonia swept
Thine honors from thee one and
all,
He would have wail'd, he would have
wept,
That thy proud spirit should have
bow'd

To Alexander, doubly proud.
Oh, Iran! Iran! had he known
The downfall of his mighty throne,
Or had he seen that fatal night,

When the young king of Macedon
In madness led his veterans on,
And Thais held the funeral light,
Around that noble pile which rose
Irradiant with the pomp of gold,
In high Persepolis of old,
Encompass'd with its frenzied foes;
He would have groan'd, he would
have spread

The dust upon his laurel'd head,
To view the setting of that star,
Which beam'd so gorgeously and far
O'er Anatolia and the fane
Of Belus, and Caister's plain,

And Sardis, and the glittering sands
Of bright Pactolus, and the lands
Where Croesus held his rich domain:
On fair Diarbeck's land of spice,¹
Adiabene's plains of rice,
Where down th' Euphrates, swift and
strong,

The shield-like kuphars bound along;²
And sad Cunaxa's field, where, mixing
With host to adverse host opposed,
'Mid clashing shield and spear trans-
fixing,

The rival brothers sternly closed.
And further east, where, broadly roll'd,
Old Indus pours his stream of gold;
And there where, tumbling deep and
hoarse,

Blue Ganga leaves her vaccine source;³
Loveliest of all the lovely streams
That meet immortal Titan's beams,
And smile upon their fruitful way
Beneath his golden Orient ray:
And southward to Cilicia's shore,

¹ Xenophon says that every shrub in these
wilds had an aromatic odor.

² Rennel on Herodotus.

³ The cavern in the ridge of Himmalab,
whence the Ganges seems to derive its origi-
nal springs, has been moulded, by the mind
of Hindoo superstition, into the head of a cow.

Where Cydnus meets the billows' roar,
And where the Syrian gates divide
The meeting realms on either side;¹
E'en to the land of Nile, whose crops
Bloom rich beneath his bounteous
swell,

To hot Syene's wondrous well,
Nigh to the long-lived Æthiops.
And northward far to Trebizonde,
Renown'd for kings of chivalry,
Near where old Hyssus, rolling from
the strand,

Disgorges in the Euxine Sea—
The Euxine, falsely named, which
whelms

The mariner in the heaving tide,
To high Sinope's distant realms,
Whence cynics rail'd at human pride.

EGYPT.

"Egypt's palmy groves,
Her grots, and sepulchres of kings."
—MOORE'S *Lalla Rookh*.

THE sombre pencil of the dim-gray
dawn

Draws a faint sketch of Egypt to
mine eye.

As yet uncolor'd by the brilliant
morn,
And her gay orb careering up the sky.

And see! at last he comes in radiant
pride,

Life in his eye, and glory in his
ray;

No veiling mists his growing splendor
hide,

And hang their gloom around his
golden way.

The flowery region brightens in his
smile,

Her lap 'of blossoms freights the
passing gale,

That robs the odors of each balmy
isle.

Each fragrant field and aromatic
vale.

But the first glitter of his rising beam
Falls on the broad-based pyramids
sublime,

As proud to show us with his earliest
gleam.

Those vast and hoary enemies of
Time.

E'en History's self, whose certain
scrutiny

Few eras in the list of Time beguile,
Pauses, and scans them with aston-
ish'd eye,

As unfamiliar with their aged pile.

¹ See Xenophon's "Expeditio Cyri."

Awful, august, magnificent, they
tower

Amid the waste of shifting sands
around;

The lapse of year and month and day
and hour,

Alike unfelt, perform th' unwearied
round.

How often hath yon day-god's burn-
ing light,

From the clear sapphire of his
stainless heaven,

Bathed their high peaks in noontide
brilliance bright,

Gilded at morn, and purpled them at
even!¹

THE DRUID'S PROPHECIES.²

MONA! with flame thine oaks are
streaming,

Those sacred oaks we rear'd on
high:

Lo! Mona, lo! the swords are gleaming
Adown thine hills confusedly.

Hark! Mona, hark! the chargers'
neighing!

The clang of arms and helmets
bright!

The crash of steel, the dreadful bray-
ing

Of trumpets thro' the madd'ning
fight!

Exalt your torches, raise your voices;
Your thread is spun — your day is
brief;

Yea! howl for sorrow! Rome rejoices,
But Mona — Mona bends in grief!

But woe to Rome, though now she
raises

Yon eagles of her haughty power;

Though now her sun of conquest
blazes,

Yet soon shall come her darkening
hour!

Woe, woe to him who sits in glory,
Enthroned on thine hills of pride!

Can he not see the poignard gory
With his best heart's-blood deeply
dyed?

¹ See Savary's letters.

² "Stabat pro littore diversa acies, densa
armis virisque, intercurantibus feminis in
modum Furiarum, quæ veste ferali, crinibus
dejectis, facies præferebant. Druidæque
circum, preces diras, sublati ad cælum ma-
nibus, fundentes," etc.—TACIT., *Annal.* xiv.,
c. 30.

Ah! what avails his gilded palace,
Whose wings the seven-hill'd town
enfold?¹

The costly bath, the crystal chalice?
The pomp of gems, the glare of
gold?

See where, by heartless anguish
driven,
Crowless he creeps 'mid circling
thorns;²

Around him flash the bolts of heaven,
And angry earth before him yawns.³

Then, from his pinnacle of splendor,
The feeble king,⁴ with locks of gray,
Shall fall, and sovereign Rome shall
render

Her sceptre to the usurper's⁵ sway.

Who comes with sounds of mirth and
gladness,
Triumphing o'er the prostrate
dead?⁶

Ay, me! thy mirth shall change to
sadness,

When Vengeance strikes thy guilty
head.

Above thy noonday feast suspended,
High hangs in air a naked sword:
Thy days are gone; thy joys are ended,
The cup, the song, the festal board.

Then shall the eagle's shadowy pinion
Be spread beneath the eastern
skies;⁷

And dazzling far with wide dominion,
Five brilliant stars shall brightly
rise.⁸

Then, coward king!⁹ the helpless agèd
Shall bow beneath thy dastard
blow;

¹ Pliny says that the golden palace of Nero extended all round the city.

² "Ut ad diverticulum ventum est, dimissis equis inter fruticeta ac vepres, per arundineti semitam ægre, nec nisi strata sub pedibus veste, ad adversum villæ parietem evasit." — SÆTON., *Vit. Cæsar*.

³ "Statimque tremore terræ, et fulgure adverso pavefactus, audit ex proximis castris clamorem," etc. — *Ibid*.

⁴ Galba.

⁵ Otho.

⁶ "Utque campos, in quibus pugnatum est, adiit [i.e. Vitellius] plurimum meri propalam hausit," etc. — SÆTON.

⁷ At the siege of Jerusalem.

⁸ The five good emperors: Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius, or Antoninus the Philosopher. Perhaps the best commentary on the life and virtues of the last is his own volume of "Meditations."

⁹ "Debiles pedibus, et eos, qui ambulare non possent, in gigantum modum, ita ut a genibus de pannis et linteis quasi dracones digerentur; eosdemque sagittis confecit." — ÆL. LAMPRID. in *Vita Comm*. Such were the laudable amusements of Commodus!

But reckless hands and hearts, en-
raged,
By double fate shall lay thee low.¹

And two,² with death-wounds deeply
mangled,

Low on their parent earth shall lie;
Fond wretches! ah! too soon entan-
gled

Within the snares of royalty.

Then comes that mighty one victorious
In triumph o'er this earthly ball,³
Exulting in his conquests glorious —
Ah! glorious to his country's fall!

But thou shalt see the Romans flying,
O Albyn! with yon dauntless
ranks;⁴

And thou shalt view the Romans
dying,
Blue Carun! on thy mossy banks.

But lo! what dreadful visions o'er me
Are bursting on this aged eye!

What length of bloody train before
me

In slow succession passes by!⁵

Thy hapless monarchs fall together,
Like leaves in winter's stormy ire;
Some by the sword, and some shall
wither

By lightning's flame and fever's
fire.⁶

They come! they leave their frozen
regions,

Where Scandinavia's wilds extend;
And Rome, though girt with dazzling
legions,

Beneath their blasting power shall
bend.

Woe, woe to Rome! though tall and
ample

She rears her domes of high re-
nown;

¹ He was first poisoned; but the operation not fully answering the wishes of his beloved, he was afterward strangled by a robust wrestler.

² Pertinax and Didius Julian.

³ Severus, who was equally victorious in the Eastern and Western World: but those conquests, however glorious, were conducive to the ruin of the Roman Empire. — See GIBBON, vol. vi., chap. v., p. 203.

⁴ In allusion to the real or feigned victory obtained by Fingal over Caracul, or Caracalla. — See OSSIAN.

⁵ Very few of the emperors after Severus escaped assassination.

⁶ Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander, Maximin Papienus, Balbinus, Gordian, Philip, etc., were assassinated; Claudius died of a pestilential fever; and Carus was struck dead by lightning in his tent.

Yet fiery Goths shall fiercely trample
The grandeur of her temples down!

She sinks to dust; and who shall pity
Her dark despair and hopeless
groans?

There is a wailing in her city —
Her babes are dash'd against the
stones!

Then, Mona! then, though wan and
blighted

Thy hopes be now by Sorrow's
dearth,

Then all thy wrongs shall be re-
quired —

The Queen of Nations bows to
earth!

LINES.¹

THE eye must catch the point that
shows

The pensile dew-drop's twinkling
gleam,

Where on the trembling blade it
glows,

Or hueless hangs the liquid gem.

Thus do some minds unmark'd appear
By aught that's generous or divine,

Unless we view them in the sphere

Where with their fullest light they
shine.

Occasion — circumstance — give birth

To charms that else unheeded lie,
And call the latent virtues forth

To break upon the wond'ring eye.

E'en he your censure has enroll'd

So rashly with the cold and dull,

Waits but occasion to unfold

An ardor and a force of soul.

Go then, impetuous youth, deny

The presence of the orb of day,

Because November's cloudy sky

Transmits not his resplendent ray.

Time, and the passing throng of
things,

Full well the mould of minds betray,

And each a clearer prospect brings: —

Suspend thy judgment for a day.

SWISS SONG.

I LOVE St. Gothard's head of snows,

That shoots into the sky,

Where, yet uniform'd, in grim repose

Ten thousand avalanches lie.

¹ To one who entertained a light opinion
of an eminent character, because too im-
patient to wait for its gradual development.

I love Lucerne's transparent lake,
And Jura's hills of pride,
Whence infant rivers, gushing, break
With small and scanty tide.

And thou, Mont Blanc! thou mighty
pile

Of crags and ice and snow;
The Gallic foes in wonder smile
That we should love thee so!

But we were nurst within thy breast,

And taught to brave thy storms:

Thy tutorage was well confest

Against the Frank in arms —

The Frank who basely, proudly came

To rend us from our home,

With flashing steel and wasting
flame. —

How could he, dare he come?

THE EXPEDITION OF NADIR SHAH INTO HINDOSTAN.

"Quoi! vous allez combattre un roi, dont la
puissance

Semble forcer le ciel de prendre sa defense,
Sous qui toute l'Asie a vu tomber ses rois
Et qui tient la fortune attachée à ses loix!"

— RACINE'S *Alexandre*.

"Squalent populatibus agri."

— CLAUDIAN.

As the host of the locusts in numbers,
in might

As the flames of the forest that redden
the night,

They approach: but the eye may not
dwell on the glare

Of standard and sabre that sparkle in
air.

Like the fiends of destruction they
rush on their way,

The vulture behind them is wild for
his prey;

And the spirits of death, and the
demons of wrath,

Wave the gloom of their wings o'er
their desolate path.

Earth trembles beneath them, the
dauntless, the bold;

Oh! weep for thy children, thou re-
gion of gold;¹

For thy thousands are bow'd to the
dust of the plain,

And all Delhi runs red with the
blood of her slain.

¹ This invader required as a ransom for
Mohammed Shah no less than thirty millions,
and amassed in the rich city of Delhi the
enormous sum of two hundred and thirty-
one millions sterling. Others, however, dif-
fer considerably in their account of this
treasure.

For thy glory is past, and thy splendor is dim,

And the cup of thy sorrow is full to the brim;

And where is the chief in thy realms to abide,

The "Monarch of Nations,"¹ the strength of his pride?

Like a thousand dark streams from the mountain they throng,

With the fife and the horn and the war-beating gong:

The land like an Eden before them is fair,

But behind them a wilderness dreary and bare.²

The shrieks of the orphan, the lone widow's wail,

The groans of the childless, are loud on the gale;

For the star of thy glory is blasted and wan,

And wither'd the flower of thy fame, Hindostan!

GREECE.

"Exoritur clamorque virum, clangorque tubarum." — VIRGIL.

WHAT wakes the brave of yon isle-throng'd wave?

And why does the trumpet bray?

And the tyrant groan on his gory throne,

In fear and wild dismay?

Why, he sees the hosts around his coasts

Of those who will be free;

And he views the bands of trampled lands

In a dreadful league agree.

"Revenge!" they call, "for one, for all —

In the page of song and story

Be their name erased, and ours replaced

In all its pristine glory!

"Too long in pain has Slavery's chain
Our listless limbs encumber'd;

¹Such pompous epithets the Oriental writers are accustomed to bestow on their monarchs; of which sufficient specimens may be seen in Sir William Jones's translation of the "History of Nadir Shah." We can scarcely read one page of this work without meeting with such sentences as these: "Le roi des rois;" "Les étendards qui subjuguent le monde;" "L'ame rayonnante de sa majesté;" "Le rayonnant monarque du monde;" "Sa majesté conquérante du monde;" etc.

²"The land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." — Joel.

Too long beneath her freezing breath
Our torpid souls have slumber'd.

"But now we rise — the great, the wise

Of ages past inspire us!

Oh! what could inflame our love of fame,

If that should fail to fire us?

"Let Cecrops' town of old renown

Her bands and chieftains muster;

With joy unsheathe the blade of death,

And crush the foes who crush'd her!

"We come, we come, with trump and drum,

To smite the hand that smote us,

And spread the blaze of freedom's rays

From Athens to Eurotas!"

THE MAID OF SAVOY.

Down Savoy's hills of stainless white

A thousand currents run,

And sparkle bright in the early light

Of the slowly-rising sun:

But brighter far,

Like the glance of a star

From regions above,

Is the look of love

In the eye of the Maid of

Savoy!

Down Savoy's hills of lucid snow

A thousand roebucks leap,

And headlong they go when the bugles blow,

And sound from steep to steep:

But lighter far,

Like the motion of air

On the smooth river's bed,

Is the noiseless tread

Of the foot of the Maid of

Savoy!

In Savoy's vales, with green array'd,

A thousand blossoms flower,

'Neath the odorous shade by the larches made,

In their own ambrosial bower:

But sweeter still,

Like the cedars which rise

On Lebanon's hill

To the pure blue skies,

Is the breath of the Maid of

Savoy!

In Savoy's groves full merrily sing

A thousand songsters gay,

When the breath of spring calls them forth on the wing,

To sport in the sun's mild ray :
 But softer far,
 Like the holy song
 Of angels in air,
 When they sweep along,
 Is the voice of the Maid of
 Savoy !

IGNORANCE OF MODERN EGYPT.

DAY's genial beams expand the flowers
 That bloom in Damietta's bowers ;
 Beneath the night's descending dew
 They close those leaves of finest hue :
 So Science droops in Egypt's land,
 Beneath the Turkish despot's hand ;
 The damps of Ignorance and Pride
 Close up its leaves, its beauties hide :
 The morrow's rays her flowers may
 woo —

Is there no ray for Science too ?

MIDNIGHT.

'Tis midnight o'er the dim mere's
 lonely bosom,
 Dark, dusky, windy midnight: swift
 are driven
 The swelling vapors onward: every
 blossom
 Bathes its bright petals in the tears
 of heaven.
 Imperfect, half-seen objects meet the
 sight,
 The other half our fancy must
 portray ;
 A wan, dull, lengthen'd sheet of
 swimming light
 Lies the broad lake : the moon con-
 ceals her ray,
 Sketch'd faintly by a pale and lurid
 gleam
 Shot thro' the glimmering clouds :
 the lovely planet
 Is shrouded in obscurity ; the scream
 Of owl is silenced ; and the rocks of
 granite
 Rise tall and drearily, while damp
 and dank
 Hang the thick willows on the reedy
 bank.
 Beneath, the gurgling eddies slowly
 creep,
 Blacken'd by foliage ; and the glut-
 ting wave,
 That saps eternally the cold gray
 steep,
 Sounds heavily within the hollow
 cave.
 All earth is restless — from his glossy
 wing¹

¹ The succeeding lines are a paraphrase of
 Ossian.

The heath-fowl lifts his head at
 intervals ;
 Wet, driving, rainy, come the burst-
 ing squalls ;
 All nature wears her dun dead cover-
 ing.
 Tempest is gather'd, and the brooding
 storm
 Spreads its black mantle o'er the
 mountain's form ;
 And, mingled with the rising roar, is
 swelling,
 From the far hunter's booth, the
 blood-hound's yelling,
 The water-falls in various cadence
 chiming,
 Or in one loud unbroken sheet
 descending,
 Salute each other thro' the night's
 dark womb ;
 The moaning pine-trees to the wild
 blast bending,
 Are pictured faintly thro' the
 chequer'd gloom ;
 The forests, half-way up the mountain
 climbing,
 Resound with crash of falling bran-
 ches ; quiver
 Their aged mossy trunks : the
 startled doe
 Leaps from her leafy lair : the
 swelling river
 Winds his broad stream majestic,
 deep, and slow.

"IN SUMMER, WHEN ALL NATURE GLOWS."

"Nature in every form inspires delight."
 — COWPER.

In summer, when all nature glows,
 And lends its fragrance to the rose,
 And tints the sky with deeper blue,
 And copious sheds the fruitful dew ;
 When odors come with every gale,
 And nature holds her carnival ;
 When all is bright and pure and calm,
 The smallest herb or leaf can charm
 The man whom nature's beauties warm.

The glitt'ring tribes of insects gay,
 Disporting in their parent-ray,
 Each full of life and careless joy,
 He views with philosophic eye :
 For well he knows the glorious Hand,
 That bade th' eternal mountains stand,
 And spread the vast and heaving main,
 And studded heaven's resplendent
 plain,
 Gave life to nature's humbler train.

Nor less admires his mighty pow'r
 In the fine organs of a flow'r,

Than when he bids the thunder roll,
 Rebelling o'er the stormy pole;
 Or launches forth his bolts of fire
 On the lost objects of his ire;
 Or with the yawning earthquakeshocks
 The reeling hills and shatter'd rocks,
 And every mortal project mocks.

No skeptic he — who bold essays
 T' unravel all the mystic maze
 Of the Creator's mighty plan —
 A task beyond the pow'rs of man;
 Who, when his reason fails to soar
 High as his will, believes no more —
 No! — calmly thro' the world he steals,
 Nor seeks to trace what God conceals,
 Content with what that God reveals.

SCOTCH SONG.

THERE are tears o' pity, an' tears o'
 wae,
 An' tears for excess o' joy will fa',
Yet the tears o' luv are sweeter than a'!

There are sighs o' pity, an' sighs o'
 wae,
 An' sighs o' regret frae the saul will
 gae;
Yet the sighs o' luv are sweeter than a'!

There's the look o' pity, the look o'
 wae,
 The look o' frien', an' the look o' fae;
Yet the look o' luv is sweeter than a'!

There's the smile o' friends when they
 come frae far,
 There's the smile o' joy in the festive
 ha';
Yet the smile o' luv is sweeter than a'!

"BORNE ON LIGHT WINGS OF BUOYANT DOWN."

"Nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna."
 — HORACE.

BORNE on light wings of buoyant down,
 Mounts the hoar thistle-beard aloft;
 An air scarce felt can bear it on,
 A touch propel, tho' e'er so soft:
 Dislodged from yonder thistle's head,
 Upon the passing gale it fled.

See! to each object on its way
 A faithless moment it adheres;
 But if one breeze upon it play,
 Breaks its slight bonds and dis-
 appears:

Its silken sail each zephyr catches,
 A breath its airy hold detaches.

The man who wins thy love awhile,
 Should never dream it will remain;

For one fond word, one courteous
 smile,

Will set thy heart afloat again.
 But he whose eye the light can chase,
 That sports above the trembling vase,

Attend its roving sheen, pursue
 Its rapid movements here and there,
 And with a firm unwavering view
 Arrest the fleeting phantom fair,
 May fix inconstancy — ensure
 Thy love, thy fickle faith secure!

How many have — for many ask —
 The kiss I fondly deem'd my own!
 And hundreds in succession bask
 In eye-beams due to me alone:
 Tho' all, like me, in turn must prove
 The wandering nature of thy love.

Thou saw'st the glow-worm on our
 way,

Last eve, with mellow lustre shine—
 Clad in pellucid flame she lay,
 And glimmer'd in her amber shrine—
 Would that those eyes of heavenly
 blue
 Were half as faithful and as true!

And lo! the blush, quick mantling,
 breaks

In rich suffusion o'er thy cheek;
 In sudden vermeil Conscience speaks,
 No further, fuller proof I seek:
 The rosy herald there was sent,
 To bid thee own it and repent.

SONG.

It is the solemn even-time,
 And the holy organ's pealing:
 And the vesper chime, oh! the vesper
 chime!
 O'er the clear blue wave is stealing.

It is the solemn mingled swell
 Of the monks in chorus singing:
 And the vesper bell, oh! the vesper
 bell!
 To the gale is its soft note flinging.

'Tis the sound of the voices sweeping
 along,
 Like the wind thro' a grove of
 larches:
 And the vesper song, oh! the vesper
 song!
 Echoes sad thro' the cloister'd
 arches.

"THE STARS OF YON BLUE PLACID SKY."

"... supereminet omnes." — VIRGIL.
 The stars of yon blue placid sky

In vivid thousands burn,
And beaming from their orbs on high,
On radiant axes turn :
The eye with wonder gazes there,
And could but gaze on sight so fair.

But should a comet, brighter still,
His blazing train unfold
Among the many lights that fill
The sapphirine with gold ;
More wonder then would one bestow
Than millions of a meaner glow.

E'en so, sweet maid ! thy beauties
shine

With light so peerless and divine,
That others, who have charm'd before,
When match'd with thee, attract no
more.

FRIENDSHIP.

"Neque ego nunc de vulgari aut de medio-
cri, quæ tamen ipsa et delectat et prodest,
sed de vera et perfecta loquor [amicitia].
qualis eorum, qui pauci nominantur, fuit."
— CICERO.

O THOU most holy Friendship ! where-
so'er

Thy dwelling be — for in the courts
of man

But seldom thine all-heavenly voice
we hear,

Sweet'ning the moments of our nar-
row span ;

And seldom thy bright footsteps do
we scan

Along the weary waste of life unblest,
For faithless is its frail and way-
ward plan,

And perfidy is man's eternal guest,
With dark suspicion link'd and shame-
less interest !

'Tis thine, when life has reach'd its
final goal,

Ere the last sigh that frees the mind
be giv'n,

To speak sweet solace to the parting
soul,

And pave the bitter path that leads
to heav'n :

'Tis thine, when'er the heart is
rack'd and riv'n

By the hot shafts of baleful calumny,
When the dark spirit to despair is
driv'n,

To teach its lonely grief to lean on
thee,

And pour within thine ear the tale of
misery.

But where art thou, thou comet of an
age,

Thou phoenix of a century ? Per-
chance

Thou art but of those fables which
engage

And hold the minds of men in giddy
trance.

Yet, be it so, and be it all romance,
The thought of thine existence is so
bright

With beautiful imaginings — the
glance

Upon thy fancied being such delight,
That I will deem thee Truth, so lovely
is thy might !

ON THE DEATH OF MY GRAND- MOTHER.

"Cui pudor et justitiæ soror
Incorrupta fides nudaque veritas,
Quando ullum invenient parem ?"
— HORACE.

THERE on her bier she sleeps !

E'en yet her face its native sweetness
keeps.

Ye need not mourn above that faded
form,

Her soul defies the ravage of the
worm ;

Her better half has sought its heav-
enly rest,

Unstain'd, unharm'd, unfetter'd, un-
oppress ;

And far above all worldly pain and
woe,

She sees that God she almost saw be-
low.

She trod the path of virtue from her
birth,

And finds in Heaven what she sought
on earth ;

She wins the smile of her eternal King,
And sings his praise where kindred
angels sing.

Her holy patience, her unshaken faith,
How well they smooth'd the rugged
path of Death !

She met his dread approach without
alarm,

For Heaven in prospect makes the
spirit calm.

In steadfast trust and Christian virtue
strong,

Hope on her brow, and Jesus on her
tongue ;

Her faith, like Stephen's, soften'd her
distress —

Scarce less her anguish, scarce her
patience less !

"AND ASK ME WHY THESE SAD TEARS STREAM ?"

"Te somnia nostra reducant." — OVID.

AND ask ye why these sad tears
stream ?

Why these wan eyes are dim with weeping?
I had a dream — a lovely dream,
Of her that in the grave is sleeping.

I saw her as 'twas yesterday,
The bloom upon her cheek still glowing;
And round her play'd a golden ray,
And on her brows were gay flowers blowing.

With angel-hand she swept a lyre,
A garland red with roses bound it;
Its strings were wreath'd with lambent fire,
And amaranth was woven round it.

I saw her mid the realms of light,
In everlasting radiance gleaming;
Co-equal with the seraphs bright,
Mid thousand thousand angels beaming.

I strove to reach her, when, behold,
Those fairy forms of bliss Elysian,
And all that rich scene wrapt in gold
Faded in air — a lovely vision!

And I awoke, but oh! to me
That waking hour was doubly weary;
And yet I could not envy thee,
Although so blest, and I so dreary.

ON SUBLIMITY.

"The sublime always dwells on great objects and terrible." — BURKE.

O TELL me not of vales in tenderest green,

The poplar's shade, the plantain's graceful tree;

Give me the wild cascade, the rugged scene,

The loud surge bursting o'er the purple sea:

On such sad views my soul delights to pore,

By Teneriffe's peak, or Kilda's giant height,

Or dark Loffoden's melancholy shore,
What time gray eve is fading into night;

When by that twilight beam I scarce descry
The mingled shades of earth and sea

and sky.

Give me to wander at midnight alone,
Through some august cathedral,
where, from high,

The cold, clear moon on the mosaic stone

Comes glancing in gay colors gloriously,

Through windows rich with gorgeous blazonry,

Gilding the niches dim, where, side by side,

Stand antique mitred prelates, whose bones lie

Beneath the pavement, where their deeds of pride

Were graven, but long since are worn away

By constant feet of ages day by day.

Then, as Imagination aids, I hear

Wild heavenly voices sounding from the choir,

And more than mortal music meets mine ear,

Whose long, long notes among the tombs expire,

With solemn rustling of cherubic wings,

Round those vast columns which the roof upbear;

While sad and undistinguishable things

Do flit athwart the moonlit windows there;

And my blood curdles at the chilling sound

Of lone, unearthly steps, that pace the hallow'd ground!

I love the starry spangled heav'n, resembling

A canopy with fiery gems o'erspread,
When the wide loch with silvery sheen is trembling,

Far stretch'd beneath the mountain's hoary head.

But most I love that sky, when, dark with storms,

It frowns terrific o'er this wilder'd earth,

While the black clouds, in strange and uncouth forms,

Come hurrying onward in their ruinous wrath;

And shrouding in their deep and gloomy robe

The burning eyes of heav'n and Dian's lucid globe!

I love your voice, ye echoing winds, that sweep

Thro' the wide womb of midnight, when the veil

Of darkness rests upon the mighty deep,

The laboring vessel, and the shatter'd sail —

Save when the forked bolts of lightning leap

On flashing pinions, and the mariner pale

Raises his eyes to heav'n. Oh! who would sleep

What time the rushing of the angry
gale
Is loud upon the waters? — Hail, all
hail!
Tempest and clouds and night and
thunder's rending peal!

All hail, Sublimity! thou lofty one,
For thou dost walk upon the blast,
and gird
Thy majesty with terrors, and thy
throne
Is on the whirlwind, and thy voice
is heard
In thunders and in shakings: thy de-
light
Is in the secret wood, the blasted
heath,
The ruin'd fortress, and the dizzy
height,
The grave, the ghastly charnel-
house of death,
In vaults, in cloisters, and in gloomy
piles,
Long corridors and towers and soli-
tary aisles!

Thy joy is in obscurity, and plain
Is naught with thee; and on thy
steps attend
Shadows but half distinguish'd; the
thin train
Of hovering spirits round thy path-
way bend,
With their low tremulous voice and
airy tread,¹
What time the tomb above them
yawns and gapes:
For thou dost hold communion with
the dead
Phantoms and phantasies and grisly
shapes;
And shades and headless spectres of
St. Mark,²
Seen by a lurid light, formless and
still and dark!

What joy to view the varied rainbow
smile
On Niagara's flood of matchless
might,
Where all around the melancholy isle³
The billows sparkle with their hues
of light!
While, as the restless surges roar and
rave,

¹ According to Burke, a low, tremulous, intermitted sound is conducive to the sublime.

² It is a received opinion, that on St. Mark's Eve all the persons who are to die in the following year make their appearances without their heads in the churches of their respective parishes. See Dr. Langhorne's Notes to Collins.

³ This island, on both sides of which the waters rush with astonishing swiftness, is 900 or 800 feet long, and its lower edge is just at the perpendicular edge of the fall.

The arrowy stream descends with
awful sound,
Wheeling and whirling with each
breathless wave.¹

Immense, sublime, magnificent, pro-
found!

If thou hast seen all this, and could'st
not feel,

Then know, thine heart is framed of
marble or of steel.

The hurricane fair earth to darkness
changing,

Kentucky's chambers of eternal
gloom,²

The swift-paced columns of the desert
ranging

Th' uneven waste, the violent Si-
moom,

Thy snow-clad peaks, stupendous Gun-
gotree!

Whence springs the hallow'd Jum-
na's echoing tide,

Hoar Cotopaxi's cloud-capt majesty,
Enormous Chimborazo's naked

pride,

The dizzy cape of winds that cleaves
the sky,³

Whence we look down into eternity,

The pillar'd cave of Morven's giant
king,⁴

The Yanar,⁵ and the Geyser's boil-
ing fountain,

The deep volcano's inward murmur-
ing,

The shadowy Colossus of the moun-
tain;⁶

Antiparos, where sunbeams never en-
ter;

Loud Stromboli, amid the quaking
isles;

The terrible Maelstrom, around his
centre

Wheeling his circuit of unnumber'd
miles:

These, these are sights and sounds that
freeze the blood,

¹ "Undis Phlegethon perlustrat anhelis,"
—CLAUDIAN.

² See Dr. Nahum Ward's account of the great Kentucky cavern, in the *Monthly Magazine*, October, 1816.

³ In the Ukraine.

⁴ Fingal's Cave in the Island of Staffa. If the Colossus of Rhodes bestrid a harbor, Fingal's powers were certainly far from despicable:

Achos air Cromleach druin-ard
Chos eile air Crommeal dubh
Thoga Fion le lamh mhoir
An d'uisge o Lubhair na fruth.

With one foot on Cromleach his brow,
The other on Crommeal the dark,
Fion took up with his large hand
The water from Lubhair of streams.

See the Dissertations prefixed to Ossian's Poems.

⁵ Or perpetual fire.

⁶ Alias, the Spectre of the Broken.

Yet charm the awe-struck soul which
doats on solitude.

Blest be the bard, whose willing feet
rejoice

To tread the emerald green of Fan-
cy's vales,

Who hears the music of her heav-
enly voice,

And breathes the rapture of her
nectar'd gales !

Blest be the bard, whom golden Fancy
loves,

He strays forever thro' her bloom-
ing bowers,

Amid the rich profusion of her groves,
And wreathes his forehead with her
spicy flowers

Of sunny radiance; but how blest is he
Who feels the genuine force of high
Sublimity !

THE DEITY.

"Immutable — immortal — infinite!"
— MILTON.

WHERE is the wonderful abode,
The holy, secret, searchless shrine,
Where dwells the immaterial God,
The all-pervading and benign ?

Oh that he were reveal'd to me,
Fully and palpably display'd
In all the awful majesty
Of Heaven's consummate pomp ar-
ray'd —

How would the overwhelming light
Of his tremendous presence beam!
And how insufferably bright
Would the broad glow of glory
stream !

What tho' this flesh would fade like
grass,
Before th' intensity of day ?
One glance at Him who always was,
The fiercest pangs would well repay.

When Moses on the mountain's brow
Had met th' Eternal face to face,
While anxious Israel stood below,
Wond'ring and trembling at its
base ;

His visage, as he downward trod,
Shone starlike on the shrinking
crowd,

With lustre borrow'd from his God :
They could not brook it, and they
bow'd.

The mere reflection of the blaze
That lighten'd round creation's
Lord,

Was too puissant for their gaze ;
And he that caught it was adored.

Then how ineffably august,
How passing wond'rous must He
be,
Whose presence lent to earthly dust
Such permanence of brilliancy !

Throned in sequester'd sanctity,
And with transcendent glories
crown'd ;
With all His works beneath His eye,
And suns and systems burning
round, —

How shall I hymn Him ? How aspire
His holy Name with song to blend,
And bid my rash and feeble lyre
To such an awless flight ascend ?

THE REIGN OF LOVE.

"In freta dum fluvii current," etc.
— VIRGIL.

WHILE roses boast a purple dye,
While seas obey the blast,
Or glowing rainbows span the sky —
The reign of love shall last.

While man exults o'er present joy,
Or mourns o'er joy that's past,
Feels virtue soothe, or vice alloy —
The reign of love shall last.

While female charms attract the
mind,
In moulds of beauty cast ;
While man is warm, or woman kind —
The reign of love shall last.

"TIS THE VOICE OF THE DEAD."

"Non omnis moriar." — HORACE.

'Tis the voice of the dead
From the depth of their glooms :
Hark ! they call me away
To the world of the tombs !
I come, lo ! I come
To your lonely abodes,
For my dust is the earth's
But this soul is my God's !

Thine is not the triumph,
O invincible Death !
Thou hast not prevail'd,
Tho' I yield thee my breath ;
Thy sceptre shall wave
O'er a fragment of clay,
But my spirit, thou tyrant,
Is bounding away !

I fear not, I feel not
The pang that destroys,
In the bliss of that thought —

That the blest shall rejoice:
For why should I shrink?
One moment shall sever
My soul from its chain,
Then it liveth forever!

Then weep not for me,
Tho' I sink, I shall rise;
I shall live, tho' I sleep —
'Tis the guilty who dies.
E'en now in mine ear
'Tis a seraph who sings:
Farewell! — for I go
On the speed of his wings!

TIME: AN ODE.

I SEE the chariot, where,
Throughout the purple air,
The forelock'd monarch rides:
Arm'd like some antique vehicle for
war,
Time, hoary Time! I see thy scythèd
car,
In voiceless majesty,
Cleaving the clouds of ages that float
by,
And change their many-color'd
sides,
Now dark, now dun, now richly
bright,
In an ever-varying light.
The great, the lowly, and the brave
Bow down before the rushing
force
Of thine unconquerable course;
Thy wheels are noiseless as the
grave,
Yet fleet as Heaven's red bolt they
hurry on,
They pass above us, and are gone!

Clear is the track which thou hast
past;
Strew'd with the wrecks of frail
renown,
Robe, sceptre, banner, wreath, and
crown,
The pathway that before thee
lies,
An undistinguishable waste,
Invisible to human eyes,
Which fain would scan the various
shapes which glide
In dusky cavalcade,
Imperfectly descried,
Through that intense, impen-
etrable shade.

Four gray steeds thy chariot draw;
In th' obdurate, tameless jaw
Their rusted iron bits they sternly
champ;
Ye may not hear the echoing tramp

Of their light-bounding, windy
feet,
Upon that cloudy pavement beat.
Four wings have each, which, far out-
spread,
Receive the many blasts of heav'n,
As with unwearied speed,
Throughout the long extent of ether
driv'n,
Onward they rush forever and for
aye:
Thy voice, thou mighty Charioteer!
Always sounding in their ear,
Throughout the gloom of night and
heat of day.

Fast behind thee follows Death,
Thro' the ranks of wan and weeping,
That yield their miserable breath,
On with his pallid courser proudly
sweeping.
Arm'd is he in full mail¹
Bright breastplate and high crest,
Nor is the trenchant falchion
wanting:
So fiercely does he ride the gale,
On Time's dark car, before him,
rest
The dew-drops of the charger's
panting,

On, on they go along the boundless
skies,
All human grandeur fades away
Before their flashing, fiery, hollow
eyes;
Beneath the terrible control
Of those vast arm'd orbs, which
roll
Oblivion on the creatures of a day.
Those splendid monuments alone he
spares
Which, to her deathless votaries,
Bright Fame, with glowing hand, up-
rears
Amid the waste of countless years.

"Live ye!" to these he crieth; "live!
To ye eternity I give —
Ye, upon whose blessed birth
The noblest star of heaven hath
shone;
Live, when the ponderous pyramids of
earth
Are crumbling in oblivion!
Live, when, wrapt in sullen shade,
The golden hosts of heaven shall
fade;
Live, when yon gorgeous sun on high
Shall veil the sparkling of his eye!
Live, when imperial Time and Death
himself shall die!"

¹ I am indebted for the idea of Death's armor to that famous chorus in "Caractacus" beginning with —

"Hark! heard ye not that footstep dread?"

GOD'S DENUNCIATIONS
AGAINST PHARAOH-
HOPHRA, OR
APRIES.

Thou beast of the flood, who hast
said in thy soul,
"I have made me a stream that for-
ever shall roll!"¹
Thy strength is the flower that shall
last but a day,
And thy might is the snow in the
sun's burning ray.
Arm, arm from the east, Babylonia's
son!
Arm, arm, for the battle — the Lord
leads thee on!
With the shield of thy fame, and the
power of thy pride,
Arm, arm in thy glory — the Lord is
thy guide.
Thou shalt come like a storm when
the moonlight is dim,
And the lake's gloomy bosom is full
to the brim;
Thou shalt come like the flash in the
darkness of night,
When the wolves of the forest shall
howl for affright.
Woe, woe to thee, Tanis!² thy babes
shall be thrown
By the barbarous hands on the cold
marble-stone:
Woe, woe to thee, Nile! for thy
stream shall be red
With the blood that shall gush o'er
thy billowy bed!
Woe, woe to thee, Memphis!² the
war-cry is near,
And the child shall be toss'd on the
murderer's spear;
For fiercely he comes in the day of
his ire,
With wheels like a whirlwind, and
chariots of fire!

"ALL JOYOUS IN THE REALMS
OF DAY."

"Hominum divomque pater." — VIRGIL.

ALL joyous in the realms of day,
The radiant angels sing,

¹ "Pliny's reproach to the Egyptians, for their vain and foolish pride with regard to the inundations of the Nile, points out one of their most distinguishing characteristics, and recalls to my mind a fine passage of Ezekiel, where God thus speaks to Pharaoh, one of their kings: Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, that hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." — ROLLIN, vol. i., p. 216.

² The Scriptural appellations are "Zoan" and "Noph."

In incorruptible array,
Before the Eternal King:

Who, hymn'd by archangelic tongues,
In majesty and might,
The subject of ten thousand songs,
Sits veil'd in circling light.

Benignly great, serenely dread,
Amid th' immortal choir,
How glory plays around his head
In rays of heavenly fire!

Before the blaze of Deity
The deathless legions bend,
And to the grand co-equal Three
Their choral homage lend.

They laud that God, who has no
peers,
High — holy — searchless — pure;
Who has endured for countless years,
And ever will endure:

Who spoke, and fish, fowl, beast, in
pairs,
Or swam, or flew, or trod;
Space glitter'd with unnumber'd
stars,
And heaving oceans flow'd.

Then let us join our feeble praise
To that which angels give;
And hymns to that great Parent
raise,
In whom we breathe and live!

THE BATTLE-FIELD.

"When all is o'er, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless
dead!" — BYRON.

THE heat and the chaos of contest are
o'er,
To mingle no longer — to madden no
more:
And the cold forms of heroes are
stretch'd on the plain;
Those lips cannot breathe thro' the
trumpet again!

For the globes of destruction have
shatter'd their might,
The swift and the burning — and
wrapt them in night:
Like lightning, electric and sudden
they came;
They took but their life, and they left
them their fame!

I heard, oh! I heard, when, with bar-
barous bray,
They leapt from the mouth of the
cannon away;
And the loud-rushing sound of their
passage in air
Seem'd to speak in a terrible language
—"Beware!"

Farewell to ye, chieftains; to one and
to all,
Who this day have perish'd by sabre
or ball;
Ye cannot awake from your desolate
sleep —
Unbroken and silent and dreamless
and deep!

THE THUNDER-STORM.

"Non imitabile fulmen." — VIRGIL.

THE storm is brooding! — I would see
it pass,
Observe its tenor, and its progress
trace.
How dark and dun the gathering
clouds appear,
Their rolling thunders seem to rend
the ear!
But faint at first, they slowly, sternly
rise,
From mutterings low to peals which
rock the skies,
As if at first their fury they forbore,
And nursed their terrors for a closing
roar.
And hark! they rise into a loftier
sound,
Creation's trembling objects quake
around;
In silent awe the subject-nations hear
Th' appalling crash of elemental war:
The lightning too each eye in dim-
ness shrouds,
The fiery progeny of clashing clouds,
That carries death upon its blazing
wing,
And the keen tortures of th' electric
sting:
Not like the harmless flash on sum-
mer's eve
(When no rude blasts their silent
slumbers leave),
Which, like a radiant vision to the eye,
Expands serenely in the placid sky;
It rushes fleetlier than the swiftest wind,
And bids attendant thunders wait be-
hind:
Quick — forked — livid, thro' the air
it flies,
A moment blazes — dazzles — bursts
— and dies:
Another, and another yet, and still
To each replies its own allotted peal.
But see, at last, its force and fury
spent,
The tempest slackens, and the clouds
are rent:
How sweetly opens on th' enchanted
view
The deep-blue sky, more fresh and
bright in hue!

A finer fragrance breathes in every
vale,
A fuller luxury in every gale;
My ravish'd senses catch the rich per-
fume,
And Nature smiles in renovated bloom!

THE GRAVE OF A SUICIDE.

HARK! how the gale, in mournful
notes and stern,
Sighs thro' yon grove of aged oaks,
that wave
(While down these solitary walks I
turn)
Their mingled branches o'er yon
lonely grave!

Poor soul! the dawning of thy life
was dim;
Frown'd the dark clouds upon thy
natal day;
Soon rose thy cup of sorrow to the
brim,
And hope itself but shed a doubtful
ray.

That hope had fled, and all within was
gloom;
That hope had fled — thy woe to
frenzy grew;
For thou, wed to misery from the
womb —
Scarce one bright scene thy night
of darkness knew!

Oft when the moonbeam on the cold
bank sleeps,
Where 'neath the dewy turf thy
form is laid,
In silent woe thy wretched mother
weeps,
By this lone tomb, and by this oak-
tree's shade.

"Oh! softly tread: in death he slum-
bers here;
'Tis here," she cries, "within this
narrow cell!" —
The bitter sob, the wildly-starting
tear,
The quivering lip, proclaim the rest
too well!

ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

"Unus tanta dedit? — dedit et majora daturus
Ni celeri letho corripereetur, erat."
— DON MANUEL DE SOUZA COUTINO'S
Epitaph on Camoens.

THE hero and the bard is gone!
His bright career on earth is done,
Where with a comet's blaze he shone.

He died — where vengeance arms the
brave,
Where buried freedom quits her grave,
In regions of the eastern wave.

Yet not before his ardent lay
Had bid them chase all fear away,
And taught their trumps a bolder bray.

Thro' him their ancient valor glows,
And, stung by thralldom's scathing
woes,
They rise again, as once they rose.¹

As once in conscious glory bold,
To war their sounding cars they roll'd,
Uncrush'd, untrampled, uncontroll'd!

Each drop that gushes from their side,
Will serve to swell the crimson tide,
That soon shall overwhelm the Moslem's
pride!

At last upon their lords they turn,
At last the shame of bondage learn,
At last they feel their fetters burn!²

Oh! how the heart expands to see
An injured people all agree
To burst those fetters and be free!

Each far-famed mount that cleaves
the skies,
Each plain where buried glory lies,
All, all exclaim — "Awake! arise!"

Who would not feel their wrongs?
and who
Departed freedom would not rue,
With all her trophies in his view?

To see imperial Athens reign,
And, towering o'er the vassal main,
Rise in embattled strength again —

To see rough Sparta train once more
Her infants' ears for battle's roar,
Stern, dreadful, chainless, as before —

Was Byron's hope — was Byron's
aim:

With ready heart and hand he came;
But perish'd in that path of fame!

THE WALK AT MIDNIGHT.

"Tremulo sub lumine." — VIRGIL.

SOFT, shadowy moonbeam! by thy
light

Sleeps the wide meer serenely pale:
How various are the sounds of night,
Borne on the scarcely-rising gale!

¹ A little exaggeration may be pardoned on a subject so inspiring.

² The enthusiasm the noble poet excited reminds us of Tyrtæus.

The swell of distant brook is heard,
Whose far-off waters faintly roll;
And piping of the shrill small bird,
Arrested by the wand'ring owl.

Come hither! let us thread with care
The maze of this green path, which
binds

The beauties of the broad parterre,
And thro' yon fragrant alley winds.

Or on this old bench will we sit,
Round which the clust'ring wood-
bine wreathes,
While birds of night around us flit;
And thro' each lavish wood-walk
breathes,

Unto my ravish'd senses, brought
From yon thick-woven odorous
bowers,
The still rich breeze, with incense
fraught
Of glowing fruits and spangled
flowers.

The whispering leaves, the gushing
stream,
Where trembles the uncertain moon,
Suit more the poet's pensive dream,
Than all the jarring notes of noon.

Then, to the thickly-crowded mart
The eager sons of interest press;
Then, shine the tinsel works of art —
Now, all is Nature's loneliness!

Then, wealth aloft in state displays
The glittering of her gilded cars;
Now, dimly stream the mingled rays
Of yon far-twinkling, silver stars.

Yon church, whose cold gray spire
appears
In the black outline of the trees,
Conceals the object of my tears,
Whose form in dreams my spirit
sees.

There in the chilling bed of earth
The chancel's letter'd stone above —
There sleepeth she who gave me birth,
Who taught my lips the hymn of
love!

Yon mossy stems of ancient oak,
So widely crown'd with sombre
shade,
Those ne'er have heard the woodman's
stroke
Their solemn, secret depths invade.

How oft the grassy way I've trod
That winds their knotty boles be-
tween,

And gather'd from the blooming sod
The flowers that flourish'd there
unseen!

Rise! let us trace that path once
more,
While o'er our track the cold beams
shine;
Down this low shingly vale, and o'er
Yon rude, rough bridge of prostrate
pine.

MITHRIDATES PRESENTING
BERENICE WITH THE CUP
OF POISON.

OH! Berenice, lorn and lost,
This wretched soul with shame is
bleeding:

Oh! Berenice, I am tost
By griefs, like wave to wave suc-
ceeding.

Fall'n Pontus! all her fame is gone,
And dim the splendor of her glory;
Low in the west her evening sun,
And dark the lustre of her story.

Dead is the wreath that round her
brow
The glowing hands of Honor braided;
What change of fate can wait her now,
Her sceptre spoil'd, her throne de-
graded?

And wilt thou, wilt thou basely go,
My love, thy life, thy country sham-
ing,
In all the agonies of woe,
'Mid madd'ning shouts, and stand-
ards flaming?

And wilt thou, wilt thou basely go,
Proud Rome's triumphal car adorn-
ing?
Hark! hark! I hear thee answer
"No!"
The proffer'd life of thralldom scorn-
ing.

Lone, crownless, destitute, and poor,
My heart with bitter pain is burn-
ing;
So thick a cloud of night hangs o'er,
My daylight into darkness turning.

Yet though my spirit, bow'd with ill,
Small hope from future fortune
borrows;
One glorious thought shall cheer me
still,
That thou art free from abject sor-
rows —

Art free forever from the strife
Of slavery's pangs and tearful an-
guish;

For life is death, and death is life,
To those whose limbs in fetters lan-
guish.

Fill high the bowl! the draught is
thine!

The Romans! — now thou need'st
not heed them!

'Tis nobler than the noblest wine —
It gives thee back to fame and free-
dom!

The scalding tears my cheek bedew;
My life, my love, my all — we sever!
One last embrace, one long adieu,
And then farewell — farewell for-
ever!

In reality Mithridates had no personal in-
terview with Monima and Berenice before
the deaths of those princesses, but only sent
his eunuch Bacchidas to signify his intention
that they should die. I have chosen Bere-
nice as the more general name, though
Monima was his peculiar favorite.

THE BARD'S FAREWELL.

"The king, sensible that nothing kept alive
the ideas of military valor and of ancient glory
so much as the traditional poetry of the peo-
ple — which, assisted by the power of music
and the jollity of festivals, made deep im-
pression on the minds of the youth — gath-
ered together all the Welsh bards, and, from
a barbarous though not absurd policy, or-
dered them to be put to death." — HUMPHREYS.

SNOWDON! thy cliffs shall hear no
more

This deep-toned harp again;
But banner-cry and battle-roar
Shall form a fiercer strain!

O'er thy sweet chords, my magic lyre!
What future hand shall stray?
What brain shall feel thy master's fire,
Or frame his matchless lay?

Well might the crafty Edward fear:
Should I but touch thy chord,
Its slightest sound would couch the
spear,
And bare the indignant sword!

Full well he knew the wizard-spell
That dwelt upon thy string;
And trembled, when he heard thy
swell
Thro' Snowdon's caverns ring!

These eyes shall sleep in death's dull
night,
This hand all nerveless lie,
Ere once again yon orb of light
Break o'er the clear blue sky!

And thou, by Hell's own furies nurst,
Unfurl thy banner's pride!
But know that, living, thee I cursed;
And, cursing thee, I died¹

EPIGRAM.

MEDEA's herbs her magic gave—
They taught her how to kill or save:
No foreign aid couldst thou devise,
For in thyself thy magic lies.

ON BEING ASKED FOR A SIMILE,

TO ILLUSTRATE THE ADVANTAGE OF KEEP-
ING THE PASSIONS SUBSERVIENT TO
REASON.

As the sharp, pungent taste is the
glory of mustard,
But, if heighten'd, would trouble
your touchy papillæ;
As a few laurel-leaves add a relish to
custard,
But, if many, would fight with your
stomach and kill ye:—

So the passions, if freed from the pre-
cincts of reason,
Have noxious effects—but if duly
confined, sir,
Are useful, no doubt—this each
writer agrees on:
So I've dish'd up a simile just to
your mind, sir.

EPIGRAM ON A MUSICIAN,

WHOSE HARP-STRINGS WERE CRACKED
FROM WANT OF USING.

"WHY dost thou not *string* thine old
harp?" says a friend:
"Thy complaints," replied Dolce, "I
think never end;
I've reason enough to remember the
thing,
For you always are *harping upon the*
old string."

THE OLD CHIEFTAIN.

"And said I, that my limbs were old!"
—SCOTT.

RAISE, raise the song of the hundred
shells!

Though my hair is gray and my
limbs are cold;
Yet in my bosom proudly dwells
The memory of the days of old;

When my voice was high, and my
arm was strong,

And the foeman before my stroke
would bow,
And I could have raised the sounding
song
As loudly as I hear ye now.

For when I have chanted the bold
song of death,
Not a page would have stay'd in the
hall,
Not a lance in the rest, not a sword in
the sheath,
Not a shield on the dim gray wall.

And who might resist the united
powers
Of battle and music that day,
When, all martial'd in arms on the
heaven-kissing towers,
Stood the chieftains in peerless
array?

When our enemy sunk from our eyes
as the snow
Which falls down the stream in the
dell,
When each word that I spake was the
death of a foe,
And each note of my harp was his
knell?

So raise ye the song of the hundred
shells;
Though my hair is gray and my
limbs are cold,
Yet in my bosom proudly dwells
The memory of the days of old!

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS'S
COMPLAINT.¹

WITH cutting taunt they bade me lay
My high-strung harp aside,
As if I dare not soar away
On Fancy's plume of pride!

Oh! while there's image in my brain
And vigor in my hand,
The first shall frame the soul-fraught
strain,
The last these chords command!

'Tis true, I own, the starting tear
Has swell'd into mine eye,
When she, whose hand the plant
should rear,
Could bid it fade and die:

But, deaf to cavi, spite, and scorn,
I still must wake the lyre;

¹ This eminent poet, resenting the unworthy
treatment of the Alexandrians, quitted their
city, where he had been for some time libra-
rian, and retired to Rhodes.

And still, on Fancy's pinions borne,
To Helicon aspire.

And all the ardent lays I pour,
Another realm shall claim;
My name shall live — a foreign shore
Shall consecrate my name.

My country's¹ scorn I will not brook,
But she shall rue it long;
And Rhodes shall bless the hour she
took
The exiled child of song.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

JERUSALEM! Jerusalem!
Thou art low! thou mighty one,
How is the brilliance of thy diadem,
How is the lustre of thy throne
Rent from thee, and thy sun of fame
Darken'd by the shadowy pinion
Of the Roman bird, whose sway
All the tribes of earth obey,
Crouching 'neath his dread domin-
ion,
And the terrors of his name!

How is thy royal seat — whereon
Sat in days of yore
Lowly Jesse's godlike son,
And the strength of Solomon,
In those rich and happy times
When the ships from Tarshish
bore
Incense, and from Ophir's land,
With silken sail and cedar oar,
Wafting to Judea's strand
All the wealth of foreign climes —
How is thy royal seat o'erthrown!
Gone is all thy majesty:
Salem! Salem! city of kings,
Thou sittest desolate and lone,
Where once the glory of the Most
High
Dwelt visibly enshrined be-
tween the wings
Of Cherubims, within whose bright
embrace
The golden mercy-seat re-
main'd:
Land of Jehovah! view that sacred
place
Abandon'd and profaned!

Wail! fallen Salem! Wail:
Mohammed's votaries pollute
thy fane;
The dark division of thine holy veil
Is rent in twain!
Thrice hath Sion's crowned rock
Seen thy temple's marble state,
Awfully, serenely great,

¹ Alexandria, however, was not his native city: he was born at Naucratis.

Towering on his sainted brow,
Rear its pinnacles of snow:
Thrice, with desolating shock,
Down to earth hath seen it driv'n
From his heights, which reach to
heav'n!

Wail, fallen Salem! Wail:
Though not one stone above
another
There was left to tell the tale
Of the greatness of thy story,
Yet the long lapse of ages can-
not smother
The blaze of thine abounding
glory;
Which thro' the mist of rolling years,
O'er history's darken'd page appears,
Like the morning star, whose gleam
Gazeth thro' the waste of night,
What time old Ocean's purple stream
In his cold surge hath deeply
laved
Its ardent front of dewy light.
Oh! who shall e'er forget thy
bands, which braved
The terrors of the desert's barren reign,
And that strong arm which broke the
chain
Wherein ye foully lay enslaved,
Or that sublime Theocracy which
paved
Your way thro' ocean's vast domain,
And on, far on to Canaan's emerald
plain
Led the Israelitish crowd
With a pillar and a cloud?

Signs on earth and signs on high
Prophesied thy destiny;
A trumpet's voice above thee
rung,
A starry sabre o'er thee hung;
Visions of fiery armies, redly flashing
In the many-color'd glare
Of the setting orb of day;
And flaming chariots, fiercely dashing,
Swept along the peopled air,
In magnificent array:
The temple doors, on brazen hinges
crashing,
Burst open with appalling
sound,
A wondrous radiance streaming
round!

"Our blood be on our heads!" ye said:
Such your awless imprecation:
Full bitterly at length 'twas paid
Upon your captive nation!
Arms of adverse legions bound
thee,
Plague and pestilence stood round
thee;
Seven weary suns had brighten'd
Syria's sky,

Yet still was heard th' unceasing
cry —

“From south, north, east, and
west, a voice,

Woe unto thy sons and
daughters!

Woe to Salem! thou art lost!”

A sound divine

Came from the sainted, secret, inmost
shrine:

“Let us go hence!” — and then a
noise —

The thunders of the parting Deity,

Like the rush of countless
waters,

Like the murmur of a host!

Though now each glorious hope
be blighted,

Yet an hour shall come, when ye,

Though scatter'd like the chaff, shall
be

Beneath one standard once again
united;

When your wandering race
shall own,

Prostrate at the dazzling throne

Of your high Almighty Lord,

The wonders of His searchless
word,

Th' unfading splendors of His
Son!

LAMENTATION OF THE PERUVIANS.

THE foes of the East have come down
on our shore,

And the state and the strength of
Peru are no more:

Oh! cursed, doubly cursed, was that
desolate hour,

When they spread o'er our land in the
pride of their power!

Lament for the Inca, the son of the
Sun;

Ataliba's fallen — Peru is undone!

Pizarro! Pizarro! though conquest
may wing

Her course round thy banners that
wanton in air;

Yet remorse to thy grief-stricken
conscience shall cling,

And shriek o'er thy banquets in
sounds of despair.

It shall tell thee, that he who beholds
from his throne

The blood thou hast spilt and the
deeds thou hast done,

Shall mock at thy fear, and rejoice at
thy groan,

And arise in his wrath for the death
of his son!

Why blew ye, ye gales, when the mur-
derer came?

Why fann'd ye the fire, and why fed
ye the flame?

Why sped ye his sails o'er the ocean
so blue?

Are ye also combined for the fall of
Peru?

And thou, whom no prayers, no en-
treaties can bend,

Thy crimes and thy murders to heav'n
shall ascend:

For vengeance the ghosts of our fore-
fathers shall:

At thy threshold, Pizarro, in death
shalt thou fall!

Ay, there — even there, in the halls
of thy pride,

With the blood of thine heart shall
thy portals be dyed!

Lo! dark as the tempests that frown
from the North,

From the cloud of past time Manco
Capac looks forth —

Great Inca! to whom the gay day-
star gave birth,

Whose throne is the heav'n, and whose
foot-stool the earth —

His visage is sad as the vapors that
rise

From the desolate mountain of fire to
the skies;

But his eye flashes flame as the light-
nings that streak

Those volumes that shroud the vol-
cano's high peak.

Hark! he speaks — bids us fly to our
mountains, and cherish

Bold freedom's last spark ere forever
it perish;

Bids us leave these wild condors to
prey on each other,

Each to bathe his fierce beak in the
gore of his brother!

This symbol we take of our godhead
the Sun,

And curse thee and thine for the deeds
thou hast done.

May the curses pursue thee of those
thou hast slain,

Of those that have fallen in war on
the plain,

When we went forth to greet ye —
but foully ye threw

Your dark shots of death on the sons
of Peru.

May the curse of the widow — the
curse of the brave —

The curse of the fatherless, cleave to
thy grave!

And the words which they spake with
their last dying breath

Embitter the pangs and the tortures
of death!

May he that assists be childless and
 poor,
 With famine behind him, and death
 at his door :
 May his nights be all sleepless, his
 days spent alone,
 And ne'er may he list to a voice but
 his own !
 Or, if he shall sleep, in his dreams
 may he view
 The ghost of our Inca, the fiends of
 Peru :
 May the flames of destruction that
 here he has spread
 Be tenfold return'd on his murderous
 head !

SHORT EULOGIUM ON HOMER.

IMMORTAL bard ! thy warlike lay
 Demands the greenest, brightest bay,
 That ever wreathed the brow
 Of minstrel bending o'er his lyre,
 With ardent hand and soul of fire,
 Or then, or since, or now.

"A SISTER, SWEET ENDEAR-
 ING NAME !"

"Why should we mourn for the blest?"
 — BYRON.

A SISTER, sweet endearing name !
 Beneath this tombstone sleeps ;
 A brother (who such tears could
 blame ?)
 In pensive anguish weeps.

I saw her when in health she wore
 A soft and matchless grace,
 And sportive pleasures wanton'd o'er
 The dimples of her face.

I saw her when the icy wind
 Of sickness froze her bloom ;
 I saw her (bitterest stroke !) consign'd
 To that cold cell — the tomb !

Oh ! when I heard the crumbling
 mould
 Upon her coffin fall,
 And thought within she lay so cold,
 And knew that worms would crawl

O'er her sweet cheek's once lovely
 dye,
 I shudder'd as I turn'd
 From the sad spot, and in mine eye
 The full warm tear-drop burn'd.

Again I come — again I feel
 Reflection's poignant sting,
 As I retrace my sister's form,
 And back her image bring.

Herself I cannot — from the sod
 She will not rise again ;

But 'tis sweet thought, "She rests
 with God,"
 Relieves a brother's pain.

"THE SUN GOES DOWN IN
 THE DARK BLUE MAIN."

"Irreparabile tempus." — VIRGIL.

THE sun goes down in the dark blue
 main,
 To rise the brighter to-morrow ;
 But oh ! what charm can restore
 again
 Those days now consign'd to sor-
 row ?

The moon goes down on the calm
 still night,
 To rise sweeter than when she
 parted ;
 But oh ! what charm can restore the
 light
 Of joy to the broken-hearted ?

The blossoms depart in the wintry
 hour,
 To rise in vernal glory ;
 But oh ! what charm can restore the
 flower
 Of youth to the old and hoary ?

"STILL, MUTE, AND MOTION-
 LESS SHE LIES."

"Belle en sa fleur d'adolescence."
 — BERQUIN.

"Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay."
 — YOUNG.

STILL, mute, and motionless she lies,
 The mist of death has veil'd her
 eyes.

And is that bright-red lip so pale,
 Whose hue was freshen'd by a gale
 More sweet than summer e'er could
 bring

To fan her flowers with balmy wing !
 Thy breath, the summer gale, is fled,
 And leaves thy lip, the flower, de-
 cay'd.

When I was young, with fost'ring
 care

I rear'd a tulip bright and fair,
 And saw its lovely leaves expand,
 The labor of my infant hand.

But winter came — its varied dye
 Each morn grew fainter to mine eye ;
 Till, with'ring, it was bright no more,
 Nor bloom'd as it was wont before :

And gazing there in boyish grief, .
 Upon the dull and alter'd leaf,
 "Alas ! sweet flower," I cried in vain,
 "Would I could bid thee blush
 again !"

So now, "Return, thou crimson dye,
To Celia's lip!" I wildly cry;
And steal upon my hopeless view,
And flush it with reviving hue,
Soft as the early vermeil given
To the dim paleness of the heaven
When slowly gaining on the sight,
It breaks upon the cheerless white.
It is an idle wish — a dream —
I may not see the glazed eye beam;
I may not warm the damps of death,
Or link again the scatter'd wreath;
Array in leaves the wintry scene,
Or make parch'd Afric's deserts
green;
Replace the rose-bud on the tree,
Or breathe the breath of life in thee.

"OH! NEVER MAY FROWNS
AND DISSENSION
MOLEST."

"Ipse meique
Ante Larem proprium." — HORACE.

OH! never may frowns and dissen-
sion molest
The pleasure I find at the social
hearth;
A pleasure the dearest — the purest
— the best
Of all that are found or enjoy'd on
the earth!
For who could e'er traverse this val-
ley of tears,
Without the dear comforts of
friendship and home;
And bear all the dark disappoint-
ments and fears,
Which chill most of our joys and
annihilate some?
Vain, bootless pursuers of honor and
fame!
'Tis idle to tell ye, what soon ye
must prove —
That honor's a bauble, and glory a
name,
When put in the balance with friend-
ship and love.
For when by fruition their pleasure is
gone,
We think of them no more — they
but charm for a while;
When the objects of love and affec-
tion are flown,
With pleasure we cling to their
memories still!

ON A DEAD ENEMY.

"Non odi mortuum." — CICERO.

I CAME in haste with cursing breath,
And heart of hardest steel;
But when I saw thee cold in death,
I felt as man should feel.

For when I look upon that face,
That cold, unheeding, frigid brow,
Where neither rage nor fear has
place,
By Heaven! I cannot hate thee
now!

LINES.¹

"Cur pendet tacita fistula cum lyra?"
— HORACE.

WHENCE is it, friend, that thine en-
chanting lyre
Of wizard charm, should thus in
silence lie?
Ah! why not boldly sweep its chords
of fire,
And rouse to life its latent har-
mony?
Thy fancy, fresh, exuberant, bound-
less, wild,
Like the rich herbage of thy Plata's
shore,
By Song's resistless witchery beguiled
Would then transport us, since it
charm'd before!
For if thy vivid thoughts possess'd a
spell,
Which chain'd our ears, and fix'd
attention's gaze,
As at the social board we heard thee
tell
Of Chili's woods and Orellana's
maze —
How will they, deck'd in Song's en-
livening grace,
Demand our praise, with added
beauties told;
How in thy potent language shall we
trace
Those thoughts more vigorous and
those words more bold!

THE DUKE OF ALVA'S OB-
SERVATION ON KINGS.²

KINGS, when to private audience they
descend,
And make the baffled courtier their
prey,
Do use an orange, as they treat a
friend —
Extract the juice, and cast the rind
away.
When thou art favor'd by thy sover-
eign's eye,
Let not his glance thine inmost
thoughts discover;

¹ Occasioned by hearing an ardent and beautiful description of the scenery of Southern America given by a gentleman whom the author persuaded to put his ideas into the language of poetry.

² See D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature."

Or he will scan thee through, and lay
thee by,
Like some old book which he has
read all over.

"AH! YES, THE LIP MAY
FAINTLY SMILE."

AN! yes, the lip may faintly smile,
The eye may sparkle for a while;
But never from that wither'd heart
The consciousness of ill shall part!

That glance, that smile of passing
light,
Are as the rainbow of the night;
But seldom seen, it dares to bloom
Upon the bosom of the gloom.

Its tints are sad and coldly pale,
Dim-glimm'ring thro' their misty
veil;
Unlike the ardent hues which play
Along the flowery bow of day.

The moonbeams sink in dark-robed
shades,
Too soon the airy vision fades;
And double night returns, to shroud
The volumes of the showery cloud.

"THOU CAMEST TO THY
BOWER, MY LOVE."

"Virgo egregia forma." — TERENCE.

THOU camest to thy bower, my love,
across the musky grove,
To fan thy blooming charms within
the coolness of the shade;
Thy locks were like a midnight cloud
with silver moonbeams wove,¹
And o'er thy face the varying tints of
youthful passion play'd.

Thy breath was like the sandal-wood
that casts a rich perfume,
Thy blue eyes mock'd the lotos in the
noonday of his bloom;
Thy cheeks were like the beamy flush
that gilds the breaking day,
And in th' ambrosia of thy smiles the
god of rapture lay.²

Fair as the cairba-stone art thou, that
stone of dazzling white,³
Ere yet unholy fingers changed its
milk-white hue to night;

¹ A simile elicited from the songs of Jaya-deva, the Horace of India.

² Vide Horace's ode, "Pulchris EXCUBAT in genis."

³ Vide Sale's "Koran."

And lovelier than the loveliest glance
from Even's placid star,
And brighter than the sea of gold,¹
the gorgeous Himsagar.

In high Mohammed's boundless
heaven Al Cawthor's stream
may play,
The fount of youth may sparkling
gush beneath the western
ray;²
And Tasnim's wave in crystal cups
may glow with musk and wine,
But oh! their lustre could not match
one beauteous tear of thine!

TO —.

AND shall we say the rose is sweet,
Nor grant that claim to thee,
In whom the loveliest virtues meet
In social harmony?

And shall we call the lily pure,
Nor grant that claim to thee,
Whose taintless, spotless soul is, sure,
The shrine of purity?

And shall we say the sun is bright,
Nor grant that claim to thee,
Whose form and mind with equal
light
Both beam so radiantly?

THE PASSIONS.

"You have passions in your heart—
scorpions; they sleep now—beware how
you awaken them! they will sting you even
to death!" — *Mysteries of Udolpho*, vol. iii.

BEWARE, beware, ere thou takest
The draught of misery!
Beware, beware, ere thou wakest
The scorpions that sleep in thee!

The woes which thou canst not num-
ber,
As yet are wrapt in sleep;
Yet oh! yet they slumber,
But their slumbers are not deep.

Yet oh! yet while the rancor
Of hate has no place in thee,
While thy buoyant soul has an anchor
In youth's bright tranquil sea:

Yet oh! yet while the blossom
Of hope is blooming fair,

¹ See Sir William Jones on Eastern plants.

² The fabled fountain of youth in the Bahamas, in search of which Juan Ponce de Leon discovered Florida.

While the beam of bliss lights thy
bosom —
Oh! rouse not the serpent there!

For bitter thy tears will trickle
'Neath misery's heavy load,
When the world has put in its sickle
To the crop which fancy sow'd.

When the world has rent the cable
That bound thee to the shore,
And launch'd thee weak and unable
To bear the billow's roar;

Then the slightest touch will waken
Those pangs that will always grieve
thee,
And thy soul will be fiercely shaken
With storms that will never leave
thee!

So beware, beware, ere thou takest
The draught of misery!
Beware, beware, ere thou wakest
The scorpions that sleep in thee!

THE HIGH-PRIEST TO ALEX- ANDER.

"Derrame en todo el orbe de la tierra
Las armas, el furor, y nueva guerra."
— *La Araucana*, Canto xvi.

Go forth, thou man of force!
The world is all thine own;
Before thy dreadful course
Shall totter every throne.
Let India's jewels glow
Upon thy diadem:
Go, forth to conquest go,
But spare Jerusalem.
For the God of gods, which liveth
Through all eternity,
'Tis He alone which giveth
And taketh victory:
'Tis He the bow that blasteth,
And breaketh the proud one's
quiver;
And the Lord of armies resteth
In His Holy of Holies forever!

For God is Salem's spear,
And God is Salem's sword;
What mortal man shall dare
To combat with the Lord?
Every knee shall bow
Before His awful sight;
Every thought sink low
Before the Lord of might.
For the God of gods, which liveth
Through all eternity,
'Tis He alone which giveth
And taketh victory:
'Tis He the bow that blasteth,
And breaketh the proud one's
quiver;

And the Lord of armies resteth
In His Holy of Holies forever!

"THE DEW, WITH WHICH THE EARLY MEAD IS DREST."

"*Spes nunquam implenda.*" — LUCRETIVS.

THE dew, with which the early mead
is drest,
Which fell by night inaudible and
soft,
Mocks the foil'd eye that would its
hues arrest,
That glance and change so quickly
and so oft.

So in this fruitless sublunary waste,
This trance of life, this unsubstan-
tial show,
Each hope we grasp at flies, to be re-
placed
By one as fair and as fallacious too.

His limbs encased in aromatic wax,
The jocund bee hies home his hoard
to fill:
On human joys there lies the heavy
tax
Of hope unrealized, and beck'ning
still.

But why with earth's vile fuel should
we feed
Those hopes which Heaven, and
Heaven alone, should claim?
Why should we lean upon a broken
reed,
Or chase a meteor's evanescent
flame?

O man! relinquish Passion's baleful
joys,
And bend at Virtue's bright unsul-
lied shrine;
Oh! learn her chaste and hallow'd
glow to prize,
Pure — unalloy'd — ineffable — di-
vine!

ON THE MOONLIGHT SHINING UPON A FRIEND'S GRAVE.

Show not, O moon! with pure and li-
quid beam,
That mournful spot, where Memory
fears to tread;
Glance on the grove, or quiver in the
stream,
Or tip the hills — but shine not on
the dead:
It wounds the lonely hearts that still
survive,
And after buried friends are doom'd
to live.

A CONTRAST.

Dost ask why Laura's soul is riv'n
By pangs her prudence can't command ?

To one who heeds not she has giv'n
Her heart, alas ! *without her hand.*

But Chloe claims our sympathy,
To wealth a martyr and a slave ;
For when the knot she dared to tie,
Her hand without her heart she gave.

EPIGRAM.

A SAINT by soldiers fetter'd lay ;
An angel took his bonds away.
An angel put the chains on me ;
And 'tis a soldier sets me free.¹

THE DYING CHRISTIAN.

"It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind."
— BYRON.

I DIE — my limbs with icy feeling
Bespeak that Death is near ;
His frozen hand each pulse is stealing ;
Yet still I do not fear !

There is a hope — not frail as that
Which rests on human things —
The hope of an immortal state,
And with the King of kings !

And ye may gaze upon my brow,
Which is not sad, tho' pale ;
These hope-illumin'd features show
But little to bewail.

Death should not chase the wonted
bloom
From off the Christian's face ;
Ill prelude of the bliss to come,
Prepared by heavenly grace.

Lament no more — no longer weep
That I depart from men ;
Brief is the intermediate sleep,
And bliss awaits me then !

"THOSE WORLDLY GOODS
THAT, DISTANT, SEEM."

THOSE worldly goods that, distant,
seem

With every joy and bliss to teem,
Are spurn'd as trivial when possess'd,
And, when acquired, delight us least :

¹ The reader must suppose a young man deeply in love, but persuaded by a friend in the army to lead a military life, and forget the charms of the siren who cramped the vigor of his soul.

As torrent-rainbows,¹ which appear
Still dwindling as we still draw near ;
And yet contracting on the eye,
Till the bright circling colors die.

"HOW GAYLY SINKS THE GOR-
GEOUS SUN WITHIN HIS
GOLDEN BED."

"Tu fais naître la lumière
Du sein de l'obscurité." — ROUSSEAU.

How gayly sinks the gorgeous sun
within his golden bed,
As heaven's immortal azure glows and
deepens into red !

How gayly shines the burnish'd main
beneath that living light,
And trembles with his million waves
magnificently bright !

But ah ! how soon that orb of day
must close his burning eye,
And night, in sable pall array'd, in-
volve yon lovely sky !

E'en thus in life our fairest scenes are
preludes to our woe ;

For fleeting as that glorious beam is
happiness below.

But what ? though evil fates may
frown upon our mortal birth,
Yet Hope shall be the star that lights
our night of grief on earth :

And she shall point to sweeter morns,
when brighter suns shall rise,
And spread the radiance of their rays
o'er earth, and sea, and skies !

"OH ! YE WILD WINDS, THAT
ROAR AND RAVE."

"It is the great army of the dead returning
on the northern blast."

— *Song of the Five Bards in Ossian.*

OH ! ye wild winds, that roar and rave
Around the headland's stormy brow,
That toss and heave the Baltic wave,
And bid the sounding forest bow,

Whence is your course ? and do ye bear

The sigh of other worlds along,

¹ The term "rainbows" is not exactly applicable here, as I mean the bow after it has assumed the circular figure. "The sun shining full upon it (viz., the Fall of Staubbach) formed toward the bottom of the fall a miniature rainbow extremely bright: while I stood at some distance, the rainbow assumed a semicircular figure; as I approached, the extreme points gradually coincided, and formed a complete circle of the most lively and brilliant colors. In order to have a still fairer view, I ventured nearer and nearer, the circle at the same time becoming smaller and smaller: and as I stood quite under the fall, it suddenly disappeared." — COXE'S *Switzerland*.

When through the dark immense of air
Ye rush in tempests loud and strong?

Methinks, upon your moaning course
I hear the army of the dead;
Each on his own invisible horse,
Triumphing in his trackless tread.

For when the moon conceals her ray,
And midnight spreads her darkest
veil,
Borne on the air, and far away,
Upon the eddying blasts they sail.

Then, then their thin and feeble bands
Along the echoing winds are roll'd;
The bodiless tribes of other lands!
The formless, misty sons of old!

And then at times their wailings rise,
The shrilly wailings of the grave!
And mingle with the madden'd skies
The rush of wind, and roar of wave

Heard you that sound? It was the
hum
Of the innumerable host,
As down the northern sky they come,
Lamenting o'er their glories lost.

Now for a space each shadowy king,
Who sway'd of old some mighty
realm,
Mounts on the tempest's squally wing,
And grimly frowns thro' barred
helm.

Now each dim ghost, with awful yells,
Uprears on high his cloudy form;
And with his feeble accent swells
The hundred voices of the storm.

Why leave ye thus the narrow cell,
Ye lords of night and anarchy!
Your robes the vapors of the dell,
Your swords the meteors of the sky?

Your bones are whitening on the heath;
Your fame is in the minds of men:
And would ye break the sleep of death,
That ye might live to war again?

SWITZERLAND.

"Tous les objets de mon amour,
Nos clairs ruisseaux,
Nos hameaux,
Nos coteaux,
Nos montagnes?"
— *Ranz des Vaches.*

With Memory's eye,
Thou land of joy!
I view thy cliffs once more;
And tho' thy plains
Red slaughter stains,
'Tis Freedom's blessed gore.

Thy woody dells,
And shadowy fells,
Exceed a monarch's halls;
Thy pine-clad hills,
And gushing rills,
And foaming water-falls.

The Gallic foe
Has work'd thee woe,
But trumpet never scared thee;
How could he think
That thou wouldst shrink,
With all thy rocks to guard thee?

E'en now the Gaul,
That wrought thy fall,
At his own triumph wonders;
So long the strife
For death and life,
So loud our rival thunders!

Oh! when shall Time
Avenge the crime,
And to our rights restore us?
And bid the Seine
Be choked with slain,
And Paris quake before us?

A GLANCE.

LADY! you threw a glance at me,
I knew its meaning well;
He who has loved, and only he,
Its mysteries can tell:
That hieroglyphic of the brain,
Which none but Cupid's priests ex-
lain.¹

BABYLON.

"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin
daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there
is no throne." — *Isaiah* xlvii., 1.

Bow, daughter of Babylon, bow thee
to dust!
Thine heart shall be quell'd, and thy
pride shall be crush'd:
Weep, Babylon, weep! for thy splen-
dor is past;
And they come like the storm in the
day of the blast.

Howl, desolate Babylon, lost one and
lone!
And bind thee in sackcloth — for
where is thy throne?
Like a wine-press in wrath will I tram-
ple thee down,
And rend from thy temples the pride
of thy crown.

¹ None but the priests could interpret the
Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Though thy streets be a hundred, thy
gates be all brass,
Yet thy proud ones of war shall be
wither'd like grass;
Thy gates shall be broken, thy
strength be laid low,
And thy streets shall resound to the
shouts of the foe!

Though thy chariots of power on thy
battlements bound,
And the grandeur of waters encom-
pass thee round;
Yet thy walls shall be shaken, thy
waters shall fail,
Thy matrons shall shriek, and thy
king shall be pale.

The terrible day of thy fall is at
hand,
When my rage shall descend on the
face of thy land;
The lances are pointed, the keen
sword is bared,
The shields are anointed,¹ the helmets
prepared.

I call upon Cyrus! He comes from
afar,
And the armies of nations are
gather'd to war:
With the blood of thy children his
path shall be red,
And the bright sun of conquest shall
blaze o'er his head!

Thou glory of kingdoms! thy princes
are drunk,²
But their loins shall be loosed, and
their hearts shall be sunk;
They shall crouch to the dust, and be
counted as slaves,
At the roll of his wheels, like the
rushing of waves!

For I am the Lord, who have mightily
spann'd
The breadth of the heavens, and the
sea and the land;
And the mountains shall flow at my
presence,³ and earth
Shall reel to and fro in the glance of
my wrath!

Your proud domes of cedar on earth
shall be thrown,
And the rank grass shall wave o'er
the lonely hearth-stone;

¹ "Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield."

— *Isaiah* xxi., 5.

² "I will make drunk her princes." — *Jer-*
emiah li., 57.

³ "The mountains melted from before the
Lord." — *Judges* v., 5. "Oh that the moun-
tains might flow down at thy presence!" —
Isaiah lxiv., 1; and again, ver. 3, "The
mountains flowed down at thy presence."

And your sons and your sires and
your daughters shall bleed
By the barbarous hands of the mur-
dering Mede!

I will sweep ye away in destruction
and death,
As the whirlwind that scatters the
chaff with its breath;
And the fanes of your gods shall be
sprinkled with gore,
And the course of your stream shall
be heard of no more!¹

There the wandering Arab shall ne'er
pitch his tent,
But the beasts of the desert shall wail
and lament;
In their desolate houses the dragons
shall lie,
And the satyrs shall dance, and the
bittern shall cry!²

"OH! WERE THIS HEART OF HARDEST STEEL."

"Vultus nimium lubricus aspicit." — HORACE.

OH! were this heart of hardest steel,
That steel should yield to thee;
And tho' naught else could make it
feel,

'Twould melt thy form to see:
That eye, that cheek, that lip, possess
Such fascinating loveliness!

The first may claim whatever praise
By amorous bard is paid;
In the dark lightning of its rays
I view thy soul portray'd:
And in that soul what light must be,
When it imparts so bounteously!

Thy cheek, e'en in its humblest bloom,
Like rich carnation glows;
But when the mantling blushes come,
How fades the brightest rose!
Dead the fine hues, the beauty dead,
And coarse the velvet of its head.

Th' anemone's deep crimson dye
Beams on thy lip's red charm;
Thy voice is more than harmony,
Thy breath as sweet as balm:
But still more balmy would it be,
Would it but waft one sigh for me.

To gaze on thee is ecstasy,
Is ecstasy — but pain:
Such is thy lip, thy cheek, thine eye,
I gaze, and gaze again:

¹ "A drought is upon her waters." — *Jer-*
emiah l., 38.

² *Vide* *Isaiah* xlii., 20.

Oh! might those three bright features
bear
For me a kiss — a blush — a tear!

THE SLIGHTED LOVER.

"*Spes animi credula mutui.*" — HORACE.

I LOVED a woman, and too fondly
thought
The vows she made were constant
and sincere;

But now, alas! in agony am taught,
That she is faithless — I no longer
dear!

Why was I frenzied when her bright
black eye,
With ray pernicious, flash'd upon
my gaze?

Why did I burn with feverish ecstasy,
Stung with her scorn, and ravish'd
with her praise?

Would that her loveliness of form
and mind

Had only kindled friendship's
calmer glow!

Then had I been more tranquil and
resign'd,

And her neglect had never touch'd
me so.

But with such peerless charms before
his sight,

Who would not own resistless
Love's control?

Feel the deep thrilling of intense
delight,

And lose at once the balance of his
soul?

Such was my fate — one sole enchant-
ing hope,

One darling object from all else I
chose:

That hope is gone — its blighted blos-
soms droop;

And where shall hopeless passion
find repose?

"CEASE, RAILER, CEASE! UNTHINKING MAN."

"*Cur in amicorum vitilis tam cernis acutum,
Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius?*"
— HORACE.

CEASE, railer, cease! unthinking man,
Is every virtue found in thee?

How plain another's faults we scan,
Our own how faintly do we see!

So one who roves o'er marshy ground
Whenevening fog the scene obscure,
Sees vapor hang on all things round,
And falsely deems his station pure!

ANACREONTIC.

"*Insanire juvat.*" — HORACE.

LET others of wealth and emolument
dream,

At profits exult, and at losses repine;
Far different my object, far different
my theme —

Warm love and frank friendship,
and roses and wine!

Let other dull clods, without fancy or
fire,

Give my dear friend of Teos a mere
poet's due;

Discarding his morals, his fancy
admire,

I deem him a bard, and a moralist
too.

Ye sober, ye specious, ye sage, ye
discreet!

Your joys in perspective I never
could brook;

With rapture I seize on whatever is
sweet,

Real, positive, present — no further
I look.

I will not be fetter'd by maxims or
duties;

The cold charm of ethics I wholly
despise:

My hours glide along amid bottles
and beauties —

There's nothing to match with old
crust and bright eyes!

I vary my cups as his fashions the
dandy,

And one day the creatures of gin
haunt my brain;

And the next I depute the same office
to brandy;

And so on, and so on, and the same
round again!

I'm a flighty young spark — but I
deem myself blest,

And as happy a soul as my clerical
brother;

Tho' the wish of a moment's first half's
disposset

Of its sway o'er my mind, by the
wish of the other.

And thou who this wild mode of living
despisest,

Sententious and grave, of thy apoph-
thegms boast,

Cry shame of my nostrums; but I
know who's wisest,

Makes the best use of life, and en-
joys it the most.

"IN WINTER'S DULL AND
CHEERLESS REIGN."

"Deme supercilio nubem." — HORACE.

IN winter's dull and cheerless reign,
What flower could ever glow?
Beneath the ice of thy disdain,
What song could ever flow?

Restore thy smile! — beneath its ray
The flower of verse shall rise;
And all the ice that froze my lay
Be melted by thine eyes!

SUNDAY MOBS.

THO' we at times amid the mob may
find
A beauteous face, with many a charm
combined;
Yet still it wants the signature of
mind.
On such a face no fine expression
dwells,
That eye no inborn dignity reveals;
Tho' bright its jetty orb, as all may
see,
The glance is vacant — has no charms
for me.
When Sunday's sun is sinking in the
west,
Our streets all swarm with numbers
gayly drest;
Prank'd out in ribbons, and in silks
array'd,
To catch the eyes of passing sons of
trade.
Then giggling milliners swim pertly by,
Obliquely glancing with a roguish eye;
With short and airy gait they trip
along,
And vulgar volubility of tongue;
Their minds well pictured in their every
tread,
And that slight backward tossing of
the head:
But no idea, 'faith, that harbors there,
Is independent of a stomacher.
Their metaphors from gowns and caps
are sought,
And stays incorporate with every
thought:
And if in passing them I can but spare
A moment's glance — far better thrown
elsewhere —
They deem my admiration caught,
nor wist
They turn it on an ancient fabulist,
Who aptly pictured, in the jackdaw's
theft,
These pert aspirers of their wits bereft.
To these, as well as any under heaven,
A well-formed set of features may be
given:

But where's the halo? where's the spell
divine?

And the sweet, modest, captivating
mien?

"Those tenderer tints that shun the
careless eye,"

Where are they? — far from these
low groups they fly:

Yes, far indeed! — for here you can-
not trace

The flash of intellect along the face;
No vermeil blush e'er spreads its

lovely dye,
Herald of genuine sensibility.

These extras, e'en in beauty's absence,
a charm;

But when combined with beauty, how
they warm!

These are the charms that will not be
withstood,

Sure signs of generous birth and gen-
tle blood.

There is a something I cannot describe,
Beyond th' all-gaining influence of a

bribe,
Which stamps the lady in the mean-
est rout,

And by its sure criterion marks her
out;

Pervades each feature, thro' each ac-
tion flows,

And lends a charm to every thing she
does;

Which not the weeds of Iru could
disguise,

And soon detected wheresoe'er it lies.

PHRENOLOGY.

"Quorsum hæc tam putida tendunt?"
— HORACE.

A CURIOUS sect's in vogue, who deem
the soul

Of man is legible upon his poll:
Give them a squint at yonder doctor's

pate,
And they'll soon tell you why he
dines on plate:

Ask why yon bustling statesman, who
for years

Has pour'd his speeches in the sen-
ate's ears,

Tho' always in a politician's sweat,
Has hardly grasp'd the seals of office

yet?

The problem gravels me — the man's
possest

Of talents — this his many schemes
attest.

The drawback, what? — they tell me,
looking big,

"His skull was never moulded for in-
trigue."

Whene'er a culprit has consign'd his
breath,

And proved the Scripture adage —
 death for death,
 With peering eyes the zealous throng
 appear,
 To see if murder juts behind his ear.
 So far 'tis barely plausible — but stay!
 I ne'er can muster brass enough to say
 That a rude lump, or bunch too prom-
 inent,
 Is a bad symbol of a vicious bent.
 But when the sages strike another key,
 Consorting things that never will
 agree,
 And my consistency of conduct rate
 By inequalities upon my pate¹
 And make an inharmonious bump the
 test
 Of my delight in concord² — 'tis at
 best
 An awkward system, and not over-
 wise,
 And badly built on incoherencies.
 Another lustrum will behold our
 youth,
 With eager souls all panting after
 truth,
 Shrewd Spurzheim's visionary pages
 turn,
 And, with Napoleon's bust before
 them, learn
 Without the agency of what small
 bone
 Quicklime had ne'er upon a host been
 thrown:
 In what rough rise a trivial sink had
 saved
 The towns he burnt, the nations he
 enslaved.³
 E'en now, when Harold's minstrel left
 the scene,
 Where such a brilliant meteor he had
 been,
 Thus with the same officiousness of
 pains,
 Gazettes announced the volume of
 his brains.
 Rise, sons of Science and Invention,
 rise!
 Make some new inroad on the starry
 skies;
 Draw from the main some truths un-
 known before,
 Rummage the strata, every nook ex-
 plore,
 To lead mankind from this fantastic
 lore;
 Solve the long-doubted problems
 pending still,
 And these few blanks in nature's an-
 nals fill:
 Tell us why Saturn rolls begirt with
 flame?

¹ The bump of firmness.² The bump of tune.³ The Corsican's organ of destructiveness must have been very prominent.

Whence the red depth of Mars's as-
 pect came?
 Are the dark tracts the silver moon
 displays
 Dusk with the gloom of caverns or of
 seas?
 Think ye, with Olbers, that her glow
 intense,
 Erst deem'd volcanic, is reflected
 hence?
 Are the black spots, which in yon sun
 appear
 Long vistas thro' his flaming atmos-
 phere,
 Rents in his fiery robe, thro' which the
 eye
 Gains access to his secret sanctuary?
 Or may we that hypothesis explode,
 Led by your science nearer to our God?
 Shall we, with Glasgow's learned
 Watt, maintain
 That yon bright bow is not produced
 by rain?
 Or deem the theory but ill surmised,
 And call it light (as Brewster) polar-
 ized?
 Tell when the clouds their fleecy load
 resign,
 How the frail nitre-moulded points
 combine;
 What secret cause, when heaven and
 ocean greet,
 Commands their close, or dictates
 their retreat.¹
 On you we rest, to check th' encroach-
 ing sway
 This outré science gains from day to
 day;
 Investigation's blood-hound scent em-
 ploy
 On themes more worthy of our scru-
 tiny;
 Rob this attractive magnet of its
 force,
 And check this torrent's inundating
 course.

LOVE.

I.

ALMIGHTY Love! whose nameless
 pow'r
 This glowing heart defines too well,
 Whose presence cheers each fleeting
 hour,
 Whose silken bonds our souls com-
 pel,
 Diffusing such a sainted spell,
 As gilds our being with the light
 Of transport and of rapturous
 bliss,
 And almost seeming to unite
 The joys of other worlds to this,
 The heavenly smile, the rosy
 kiss; —

¹ The waterspout.

Before whose blaze my spirits shrink,
My senses all are wrapt in thee,
Thy force I own too much, to think
(So full, so great thine ecstasy)
That thou art less than deity!

Thy golden chains embrace the land,
The starry sky, the dark blue main;
And at the voice of thy command
(So vast, so boundless is thy reign)
All nature springs to life again!

II.

The glittering fly, the wondrous
things
That microscopic art describes;
The lion of the waste, which springs,
Bounding upon his enemies;
The mighty sea-snake of the storm,
The vorticella's viewless form,¹

The vast leviathan, which takes
His pastime in the sounding
floods;
The crafty elephant, which makes
His haunts in Ceylon's spicy
woods —
Alike confess thy magic sway,
Thy soul-enchanting voice obey!

Oh! whether thou, as bards have
said,
Of bliss or pain the partial giver,
Wingest thy shaft of pleasing dread
From out thy well-stored golden
quiver,
O'er earth thy cherub wings extend-
ing,
Thy sea-born mother's side attend-
ing; —

Or else, as Indian fables say,
Upon thine emerald lory riding,
Through gardens, 'mid the restless
play
Of fountains, in the moonbeam
gliding,
'Mid sylph-like shapes of maidens
dancing,
Thy scarlet standard high advanc-
ing; —

Thy fragrant bow of cane thou bend-
est,²
Twanging the string of honey'd
bees,

¹ See Baker on animalculæ.

² See Sir William Jones's works, vol. vi., p. 313.

"He bends the luscious cane, and twists the string;
With bees how sweet, but ah! how keen the sting!

He with five flowrets tips thy ruthless darts,
Which thro' five senses pierce enraptured hearts."

And thence the flower-tipp'd arrow
sendest,
Which gives or robs the heart of
ease;
Camdeo, or Cupid, oh be near
To listen, and to grant my prayer!

TO —.

THE dew that sits upon the rose
The brilliant hue beneath it shows;
Nor can it hide the velvet dye
O'er which it glitters tremblingly.
The fine-wove veil thrown o'er thy
face,
Betrays its bloom — thro' it we trace
A loveliness, tho' veil'd, reveal'd,
Too bright to be by ought conceal'd.

SONG.

To sit beside a crystal spring,
Cool'd by the passing zephyr's wing,
And bend my every thought to thee,
Is life, is bliss, is ecstasy!

And as within that spring I trace
Each line, each feature of my face;
The faithful mirror tells me true —
It tells me that I think of *you*!

IMAGINATION.

PERENNIAL source of rapturous pleas-
ure, hail!
Whose inexhaustive stores can never
fail;
Thou ardent inmate of the poet's
brain,
Bright as the sun and restless as the
main,
From all material Nature's stores at
will
Creating, blending, and arranging
still;
Things in themselves both beautiful
and grand,
Receive fresh lustre from thy kindling
hand;
And even those whose abstract charms
are few,
Thy spell-like touch arrays in colors
bright and new.
Oh! thou art Poetry's informing soul,
Detach'd from thee she stagnates and
is dull;
She has no sweets without thee, and
from thee
Derives her magic and her majesty;
Thou art th' essential adjunct of her
charms,
'Tis by thy aid that she transports
and warms:

Nor will I e'er with that weak sect
 concur,
 Who on obscurity alone confer
 Thy misapplied and prostituted
 name —
 A false and spurious and ungrounded
 claim! —
 Construct a mass of thoughts uncouth
 and wild,
 Their words involved, and meaning
 quite exiled;
 A mazy labyrinth without a clue,
 Wherein they lose themselves and
 readers too;
 The crude abortions of a heated
 brain,
 Where sense and symmetry are sought
 in vain!
 But images both bright and sorted
 well,
 And perspicuity, that crowning spell,
 Fervor chastised by judgment and by
 taste,
 And language vivid, elegant, and
 chaste —
 These form the poet; in such garb
 array'd,
 Then, Fancy, all thy beauties are dis-
 play'd;
 We feel thy loveliness and own thy
 sway,
 Confess thy magic pow'r, and praise
 the glowing lay!

THE OAK OF THE NORTH.

"Quæ quantum vertice ad auras
 Æthereas, tantum radice in Tartara tendit,
 Ergo non hyemes illam, non flabra, neque
 imbres
 Convellunt; immota manet, multosque ne-
 potes
 Multa virum volens durando sæcula vincit."
 — VIRGIL.

Thou forest lord! whose deathless
 arms
 Full many an age of rolling time
 Have mock'd the madness of the
 storms,
 Unfaded in thy shadowy prime
 Thou livest still — and still shalt stay,
 Tho' the destroying tyrant bow
 The temple, and the tower, and lay
 The pomp and pride of empires low.
 And if thy stately form be riven
 And blasted by the fiery levin,
 Still dost thou give that giant front,
 Undaunted, to the pitiless brunt
 Of angry winds, that vainly rave;
 And, like the scars by battle graven
 Upon the bosoms of the brave,
 The tokens of resistless heaven
 Deep in thy rugged breast are seen,
 The marks of frays that once have
 been;

The lightning's stroke, the whirl-
 wind's force,
 Have marr'd thee in their furious
 course,
 But they have left thee unsubdued;
 And if they bend thy crest awhile,
 Thou dost arise in might renew'd,
 Tameless in undiminish'd toil,
 Singly against an hostile host
 Contending, like th' immortal king,
 Who quell'd the Titans' impious boast
 With thunder, tho' he stood alone
 Defender of his starry throne,
 Dashing th' aspiring mountains
 down,
 Dark Ossa, like a powerless thing,
 And Pelion with his nodding pines;
 Then bound with adamant chains,
 Where the glad sunlight never shines,
 The earth-born in eternal pains.
 Of many who were born with thee,
 Scarce now a thought survives to
 tell;
 War hath ta'en some — their memory
 But faintly lives of those who fell:
 Even the conqueror's glorious name,
 That boasts a life beyond the tomb,
 Borne on the wings of rushing fame,
 May bow before the common doom,
 Before the measure of its praise
 Hath filled thy multitude of days.

And ere the poet's hallow'd star,
 Refulgent o'er his voiceless urn,
 Glance thro' the gloom of years so far,
 Its living fires may cease to burn.
 Thy mere existence shall be more
 Than others' immortality;
 The spirits of the great, who bore
 A sway on earth, and still would be
 Remember'd when they are not seen,
 Shall die like echoes on the wind,
 Nor leave of all that they have been
 In living hearts one thrill behind;
 Their very names shall be forgot,
 Ancient of days! ere thou art not.

The druid's mystic harp, that hung
 So long upon thy stormy boughs,
 Mute as its master's magic tongue,
 Who slumbereth in that deep re-
 pose,
 No earthly sound shall wake again,
 Nor glare of sacrificial fire,
 Nor howl of victims in their pain,
 Or the weird priestess in her ire,
 Hath mingled with th' oblivious dust
 Of him who called its spirit forth,
 In those prophetic tones which hush'd
 The enraptured children of the
 north,
 Binding them with a holy fear,
 And smiting each enchanted ear
 With such a sound as seem'd to raise
 The hidden forms of future days:

Sleep on!—no Roman foe alarms
 Your rest; and over ye shall wave
 A guardian God's protecting arms,
 And flowers shall deck your grassy
 grave!

And he who gazeth on thee now,
 Ere long shall lie as low as they;
 The daring heart, the intrepid brow,
 Not long can feel youth's joyous glow,
 The strength of life must soon
 decay.

A few short years fleet swiftly by,
 And rayless is the sparkling eye,
 Mute the stern voice of high com-
 mand,
 And still oppression's iron hand;
 The lords of earth shall waste away
 Beneath the worm, and many a day
 Of wintry frost and summer sun,
 Ere yet thy number'd hours be done;
 For thou art green and flourishing,
 The mountain-forest's stately king,
 Unshaken as the granite stone
 That stands thine everlasting throne.

There was a tower, whose haughty
 head

Erewhile rose darkly by thy side,
 But they are number'd with the dead,
 Who ruled within its place of pride;
 For time and overwhelming war
 Have crumbled it, and overthrown
 Bulwark, and battlement, and bar,
 Column, and arch, and sculptured
 stone;

Around thy base are rudely strewn
 The tokens of departed power,
 The wrecks of unrecorded fame
 Lie mouldering in the frequent
 shower:

But thou art there, the very same
 As when those hearts, which now are
 cold,

First beat in triumph to behold
 The shadow of its form, which fell
 At distance o'er the darken'd dell.
 No more the battle's black array
 Shall sternly meet the rising day;
 No beacon-fires disastrous light
 Flame fiercely in the perilous night.
 Forgotten is that fortress now,

Deserted is the feudal hall,
 But here and there the red flowers
 blow

Upon its bare and broken wall.
 And ye may hear the night-wind moan
 Thro' shatter'd hearths with moss
 o'ergrown,

Wild grasses wave above the gate;
 And where the trumpets sung at morn,
 The tuneless night-bird dwells forlorn,
 And the unanswer'd ravens prate,
 Till silence is more desolate.

For thou hast heard the clarion's
 breath

Pour from thy heights its blast of
 death,

While gathering multitudes replied
 Defiance with a shout that hurl'd
 Back on their foes the curse of pride,
 And bended bows, and flags un-
 furled;

And swiftly from the hollow vale
 Their arrowy vengeance glanced, like
 hail,

What time some fearless son of war,
 Emerging to the upper air,
 Gain'd the arm'd steep's embattled
 brows,

Thro' angry swords around him
 waving,

'Mid the leagued thousands of his
 foes,

Their fury like a lion braving:
 And faster than the summer rain
 Stream'd forth the life-blood of the
 slain,

Whom civil hate and feudal power
 Mingled in that tempestuous hour,
 Steeping thy sinewy roots, that drew
 Fresh vigor from that deadly dew,
 And still shall live—tho' monarchs
 fail;

And those who waged the battle
 then

Are made the marvel of a tale,
 To warm the hearts of future men.

On such a heart did Cambria gaze,
 When Freedom on that dismal day
 Saw Edward's haughty banners blaze
 Triumphant, and the dread array
 In the deep vales beneath her gleam,
 Then started from her ancient
 throne,

That mighty song could not redeem
 From ruthless hands and hearts of
 stone.

While ages yield their fleeting breath,
 Art thou the only living thing

On earth, which all-consuming death
 Blasts not with his destroying wing?

No! thou shalt die!—tho' gloriously
 Those proud arms beat the azure
 air,

Some hour in Time's dark womb shall
 see

The strength they boast no longer
 there.

Thou' to thy life, as to thy God's,
 Unnumber'd years are as a day,

When He, who is eternal, nods,
 Thy mortal strength must pass
 away.

Unconquer'd Fate, with viewless hand,
 Hath mark'd the moment of thy
 doom,

For He, who could create, hath
 spann'd

Thy being, and its hour shall come:
 Some thunderbolt more dread than
 all

That ever scathed thee with their
fire,
Arm'd with the force of heaven, shall
fall

Upon thee, and thou shalt expire !
Or age, that curbs a giant's might,
Shall bow thee down and fade thy
bloom,

The last of all, the bitterest blight
That chills our hearts, except the
tomb.

And then thou canst but faintly
strive

Against the foes thou hast defied,
Returning spring shall not revive
The beauty of thy summer pride ;
And the green earth no more shall
sleep

Beneath thy dark and stilly shade,
Where silvery dews were wont to weep,
And the red day-beam never stray'd,
But flow'rets of the tenderest hue,

That live not in the garish noon,
Pale violets of a heavenly blue,
Unfaded by the sultry sun,

Unwearied by the blasts that shook
Thy lofty head, securely thro'v,
Nor heeded in that grassy nook

The ceaseless wars that raged above.
The revelling elves at noon of night
Shall throng no more beneath thy
boughs,

When moonbeams shed a solemn
light,

And every star intensely glows ;
No verdant canopy shall screen
From view the orgies of their race,
But the blue heaven's unclouded
sheen

Shall pierce their secret dwelling-
place.

Tho' now the lavrock pours at morn,
Shrined in thy leaves, his rapturous
lay,

Then shall the meanest songster
scorn

To hail thee, as he wings his way.
The troubled eagle, when he flies
Before the lightnings, and the wrath
Of gathering winds and stormy skies,
That darken o'er his cloudy path,
With ruffled breast and angry eye
Shall pass thee, and descend in
haste

Amid the sheltering bowers that lie
Far down beneath the rolling blast.
Thine awful voice, that swells on high
Above the rushing of the north,
Above the thunders of the sky,
When midnight hurricanes come
forth,

Like some fall'n conqueror's, who be-
wails

His laurels torn, his humbled fame,
Shall murmur to the passing gales

At once thy glory and thy shame !

EXHORTATION TO THE GREEKS.

"En illa, illa quam sæpe optastis, libertas!"
— SALLUST.

AROUSE thee, O Greece! and remem-
ber the day,
When the millions of Xerxes were
quell'd on their way!

Arouse thee, O Greece! let the pride
of thy name

Awake in thy bosom the light of thy
fame!

Why hast thou shone in the temple of
glory?

Why hast thou blazed in those
annals of fame?

For know that the former bright page
of thy story

Proclaims but thy bondage and tells
but thy shame:

Proclaims from how high thou art
fallen! — how low

Thou art plunged in the dark gulf of
thralldom and woe!

Arouse thee, O Greece! from the
weight of thy slumbers!

The chains are upon thee! — arise
from thy sleep!

Remember the time, when nor nations
nor numbers

Could break thy thick phalanx em-
bodied and deep.

Old Athens and Sparta remember the
morning,

When the swords of the Grecians
were red to the hilt:

And, the bright gem of conquest her
chaplet adorning,

Platea rejoiced at the blood that ye
spilt!

Remember the night, when, in shrieks
of affright,

The fleets of the East in your ocean
were sunk:

Remember each day, when, in battle
array,

From the fountain of glory how
largely ye drunk!

For there is not ought that a freeman
can fear,

As the fetters of insult, the name
of a slave;

And there is not a voice to a nation
so dear,

As the war-song of freedom that
calls on the brave.

KING CHARLES'S VISION.

A vision somewhat resembling the follow-
ing, and prophetic of the Northern Alexander,
is said to have been witnessed by Charles XI.
of Sweden, the antagonist of Sigismund.
The reader will exclaim, "Credat Judæus
Apella!"

KING CHARLES was sitting all alone,
In his lonely palace-tower,
When there came on his ears a heavy
groan
At the silent midnight hour.

He turn'd him round where he heard
the sound,
But nothing might he see;
And he only heard the nightly bird
That shriek'd right fearfully.

He turn'd him round where he heard
the sound,
To his casement's arched frame:
"And he was aware of a light that
was there,"¹
But he wist not whence it came.

He looked forth into the night,
'Twas calm as night might be;
But broad and bright the flashing light
Stream'd red and radiantly.

From ivory sheath his trusty brand
Of stalwart steel he drew;
And he raised the lamp in his better
hand,
But its flame was dim and blue.

And he open'd the door of that palace-
tower,
But harsh turn'd the jarring key:
"By the Virgin's might," cried the
king that night,
"All is not as it should be!"

Slow turn'd the door of the crazy
tower,
And slowly again did it close;
And within and without, and all about,
A sound of voices rose.

The king he stood in dreamy mood,
For the voices his name did call;
Then on he past, till he came at last
To the pillar'd audience-hall.

Eight-and-forty columns wide,
Many and carved and tall
(Four-and-twenty on each side),
Stand in that lordly hall.

The king had been pight² in the mor-
tal fight,
And struck the deadly blow;
The king he had strode in the red red
blood,
Often, afore, and now:

¹ "And he was aware of a Gray-friar."
— *The Gray Brother*.

"And he was aware of a knight that was
there." — *The Baron of Smalhome*.

² "A hideous rock is pight
Of mighty magnes-stone." — SPENSER.

"You vile abominable tents,
Thus proudly pight upon our Phrygian
plains!" — SHAKESPEARE.

Yet his heart had ne'er been so har-
row'd with fear
As it was this fearful hour;
For his eyes were not dry, and his hair
stood on high,
And his soul had lost its power.

For a blue livid flame, round the hall
where he came,
In fiery circles ran;
And sounds of death, and chattering
teeth,
And gibbering tongues began.

He saw four-and-twenty statesmen
old
Round a lofty table sit;
And each in his hand did a volume
hold,
Wherein mighty things were writ.

In burning steel were their limbs all
cased;
On their cheeks was the flush of ire:
Their armor was braced, and their
helmets were laced,
And their hollow eyes darted fire.

With sceptre of might, and with gold
crown bright,
And locks like the raven's wing,
And in regal state at that board there
sat
The likeness of a king.

With crimson tinged, and with ermine
fringed,
And with jewels spangled o'er,
And rich as the beam of the sun on
the stream,
A sparkling robe he wore.¹

¹ This is, perhaps, an unpardonable false-
hood, since it is well known that Charles was
so great an enemy to finery as even to object
to the appearance of the Duke of Marl-
borough on that account. Let those readers,
therefore, whose critical nicety this passage
offends substitute the following stanza, which
is "the whole truth, and nothing but the
truth:"

With buttons of brass that glitter'd like
glass,
And brows that were crown'd with bays,
With large blue coat, and with black jack-
boot,
The theme of his constant praise.

Nothing indeed could exceed Charles's
affection for his boots: he eat, drank, and
slept in them: nay, he never went on a boot-
less errand. When the dethroned monarch
Augustus waited upon him with proposals of
peace, Charles entertained him with a long
dissertation on his unparalleled aforesaid jack-
boots: he even went so far as to threaten
(according to Voltaire), in an authoritative
epistle to the Senate at Stockholm, that unless
they proved less refractory, he would send
them one of his boots as regent! Now this,
we must allow, was a step beyond Caligula's
consul.

Yet though fair shone the gem on his
proud diadem,

Though his robe was jewell'd o'er,
Though brilliant the vest on his mailed
breast,

Yet they all were stain'd with
gore!

And his eye darted ire, and his glance
shot fire,

And his look was high command;
And each, when he spoke, struck his
mighty book,
And raised his shadowy hand.

And a headman stood by, with his axe
on high,

And quick was his ceaseless stroke;
And loud was the shock on the echo-
ing block,
As the steel shook the solid oak.

While short and thick came the
mingled shriek

Of the wretches who died by his
blow;

And fast fell each head on the pave-
ment red,
And warm did the life-blood flow.

Said the earthly king to the ghostly
king,

"What fearful sights are those?"

Said the ghostly king to the earthly
king,

"They are signs of future woes!"

Said the earthly king to the ghostly
king,

"By St. Peter, who art thou?"

Said the ghostly king to the earthly
king,

"I shall be, but I am not now."

Said the earthly king to the ghostly
king,

"But when will thy time draw
nigh?"

"Oh! the sixth after thee will a war-
rior be,

And that warrior am I.

"And the lords of the earth shall be
pale at my birth,

And conquest shall hover o'er me;
And the kingdoms shall shake, and
the nations shall quake,

And the thrones fall down before
me.

"And Cracow shall bend to my maj-
esty,

And the haughty Dane shall bow;
And the Pole shall fly from my pierc-
ing eye,

And the scowl of my clouded
brow.

"And around my way shall the hot
balls play,

And the red-tongued flames arise;
And my pathway shall be on the mid-
night sea,

'Neath the frown of the wintry
skies.

"Thro' narrow pass, over dark mo-
rass,

And the waste of the weary plain,
Over ice and snow, where the dark
streams flow,

Thro' the woods of the wild Uk-
raine.

"And though sad be the close of my
life and my woes,

And the hand that shall slay me
unshown;

Yet in every clime, thro' the lapse of
all time,

Shall my glorious conquests be
known.

"And blood shall be shed, and the
earth shall be red

With the gore of misery;

And swift as this flame shall the light
of my fame

O'er the world as brightly fly."

As the monarch spoke, crew the morn-
ing cock,

When all that pageant bright,

And the glitter of gold, and the states-
men old,

Fled into the gloom of night!

